

# **The Influence of Traditional Customs and Practices on Girls' Secondary Education in Morogoro Region in Tanzania**

*A case Study*

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## **Abstract**

This study explored the influence of traditional customs and practices on secondary education of the girls in Morogoro region, in Tanzania. To do so, the study first explored the traditional customs and practices present in the area, and then investigated the influences of practices to the secondary education of girls. The study involved four secondary schools of Morogoro region, two from the rural and two from urban areas of that region.

The study employed a qualitative research strategy, with case study principles. Documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews and focus group interview methods were used to collect data. Research respondents included Form 1 girl students, classroom teachers and head of schools from both four secondary schools. Ecological system theory and self determination theory used to guide the study.

Based on the findings, the study suggests that traditional customs and practices influence negatively secondary education of girls in Morogoro region. Further, the study indicates that girls in the Morogoro rural areas are more adversely affected by those practices than their peers in the urban areas.

Furthermore, the study finds that other conditions like socio-economic, parental education background and poor school environments can have negative impacts on girls' secondary education.

## **Dedication**

To my parents, siblings and all girls, who believe in education and strive to reach their educational goals.

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To the almighty God, whose care and strength, made it possible for me to accomplish this study.

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
A-level	Advanced Level
BEST	Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania
CSEE	Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EFA	Education for All
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
ESDSC	Education Sector Development Steering Committee
ESR	Education for Self Reliance
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalist
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MOEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
NECTA	National Examinations Council of Tanzania
NER	National Enrolment Ratio
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
O-Level	Ordinary Level
PEDP	Primary Education Development Program
PSLE	Primary School Leaving Examination
SDT	Self Determination Theory

SEDP	Secondary Education Development Plan
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UK	United Kingdoms
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Widening access to education for all has become an international commitment since the Dakar conference of the year 2000. The right to education is promoted to ensure equity between genders. Higher priority is given to girls' education especially in the developing countries, where girls have lagged behind boys in most countries. The benefits of educating girls include self esteem building, girls being more independent since girls who are educated hopefully will be in better position to make decisions about their own lives than the less educated ones (Plan UK, 2011p.57). Education is also an essential tool for women's empowerment, to know their rights and responsibilities (King and Hill, 1993). UNESCO (2002 p.65) also comments that girls' education is a necessary means of breaking patterns of economic deprivation and dependence. According to Education for All (EFA) goals, commitments to girls' education should go beyond the primary education; and Education for All should mean good quality of education, and more access to secondary and post secondary education, with gender equality (UNESCO, 2008 p.25).

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Though there have been positive international commitments to girls' education, there are still challenges to achieving that goal in most of the Sub Saharan African countries including Tanzania. Girls' education still lags behind that of boys. Various factors have been mentioned to hinder progress in girls' education in Tanzania, especially regarding secondary education. The Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) policy points to certain traditional customs and practices which hinder progress in girls' education. MOEC (1995 p.19) mentions that early marriages and pregnancy are among the traditional customs causing girls to drop out of schools. Supporting the above contention, Colclough (2003:148) referring to his study done in Tanzania, Guinea and Ethiopia, writes that "factors related to cultural norms, traditional beliefs and practice can have a strong influence on girls' enrolment, persistence and performance in schools". Further to the above explanation by MOEC (1995) and to Colclough's observation about the relationship between certain traditional practices and girls' education and concerning the impacts of traditional customs on girls' education, I have been motivated to carry out a study on this theme in order, to explore the relationship between

traditional customs and practices with girls' secondary education in Tanzania and to assess the influences of these practices on girls' education.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

Diverse traditional customs and practices seem to shape the life style of different ethnic groups in Tanzania. The objectives of this study are to explore the influence of these practices on the secondary education of girls specifically in urban and rural Morogoro region. Before proceeding with research questions, I will conceptualize the key concepts of “traditional customs and practice” and “secondary education”.

## **1.3 Key Concepts**

### **1.3.1. Traditional Customs and Practices**

‘Tradition’ originated from the Latin word ‘traderer’ meaning to transit, to hand over or to give for safe keeping. Tradition is a ritual, belief or object ‘handed down’ from generation to generation within a society. It refers also to beliefs, objects or customs performed or believed in the past and transmitted through time by being taught by one generation to the next (<http://wikipedia.org> accessed on 29/12/2011). The Oxford dictionary (1989) defines tradition as the beliefs or customs passed from one generation to the next, especially without being mediated by means of writing.

Customs is defines as usual, accepted and long established ways of behaving or doing things (Oxford dictionary, 1989). These are accepted ways of doing things or behaving in the society for example, the habit of bowing or kneeling down when greeting people older than oneself in some of the tribes in Tanzania.

Practices are defined as the habits, customs or the way of doing something that are common or habitual (Oxford dictionary, 1989).

### **1.3.2 Secondary Education**

MOEC (1995:6) defines secondary education in Tanzania as a “post primary formal education offered to a person who will have successful completed seven years of primary education and have met the requisite entry requirements”. The important requisite for joining secondary



education in Tanzania includes passing the primary education national examination. According the MOEC (1995 p.6), the objectives of secondary education in Tanzania include:

- To consolidate and broaden the scope of baseline ideas, knowledge, skills and principles acquired and developed at the primary education level.
- To enhance further development and appreciation of nation unity, identity and ethic, personal integrity, respect for and readiness to work, human rights, cultural and moral values, customs, traditions and civic responsibilities and obligations.
- To promote the development of competency in linguistic ability and effective use of communication skills in Kiswahili and in at least one foreign language.
- To provide opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding in prescribed or selected fields of study.
- To prepare students for tertiary and higher education, vocational, technical and professional training.
- To inculcate a sense and ability for self- study, self- confidence and self self- advancement in new frontiers of science and technology, academic and occupational knowledge, and skills.
- To prepare the student to join the world of work.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study aims to explore the relationship between the traditional customs and practices, and secondary education of girls. Another aim is to examine whether and how those practices have played an influential role for the secondary education of girls. The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- What are the influences of traditional customs and practices on girls' secondary education in Morogoro region in Tanzania?
- Whether and how traditional customs and practices influence the secondary education of girls in urban and rural Morogoro region?

The intention is first to reveal the traditional customs and practices present in the Morogoro region, and the second is to explore the relationship between traditional customs and girls' secondary education. The study intention is to bring awareness of the influential roles played by these practices to the secondary education of girls. Focusing on a study done in India, Ethiopia, Malawi and Sudan regarding seemingly harmful cultural norms, a report prepared by the international NGO Plan-UK writes: "Awareness-raising and public education endeavours should cover not only the harmful effects of some traditional and customary practices, but must also include discussions about the human rights of girls and young women" (Plan UK, 2007 p.26).

The sources of information on this study include interview data from Morogoro girl students and their teachers, different Tanzanian policies, school reports and education statistics, journals, books, online documents and different other documents containing relevant information.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Recently, there has been an outcry for women empowerment socially, economically and politically in most of the African countries including Tanzania. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide a useful piece of information to the government educational sectors and other education stakeholders such as non- government organizations (NGOs) on girls' education and its relation to traditional customs and practices, and that the findings also may be a useful information to other researchers who will carry out studies related to girls' education in Tanzania.

### **1.6 Thesis Structure**

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter one provides the introduction to the study including main research objectives, research questions as well as the significance of the study. Chapter two presents the context in terms of education context, culture as well as gender policies in relation to girls' education. Chapter three presents a theoretical framework whereby the "ecological system theory" is analysed in relation to the study. Chapter four is a methodological presentation of methodological issues and the concrete methods used. Chapter five briefly presents information on Morogoro region, chapter six is findings and discussion

directly related to these as they emerge: and the last chapter contains summary and concluding remarks.

### **1.7 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

This study has some limitations due to challenges faced during its implementation. Due to shortage of time it was not easy to employ observation methods though such methods may have been useful for addressing the topic. Further, due to time limits, it was not possible to make a follow up of girl students who drop out of schools due to different reasons. After completion of my field work, I also realised that it would have been useful also to include in boys students as a source of data in the study.

## **Chapter 2: Basic Information on Tanzania**

This chapter presents brief information on Tanzania. It provides information on the location and its total coverage area, political history and population. The chapter further presents information on the education system and on the traditional customs and practices in relation to girls' education.

### **2.1 Background Information on Tanzania**

Tanzania is an eastern Africa country, bordered by Kenya and Uganda in the north, Indian Ocean in the east, Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique in the south; in the western part it is bordered by Rwanda, Burundi and the democratic republic of Congo (DRC). It has a total surface area of 945,087 square kilometres.

#### **2.1.1 Political History and Population**

Tanzania (then Tanganyika) got its independence in 1961 from British colonial rule. By uniting with Pemba and Unguja islands (Zanzibar) in 1964, it became the united republic of Tanzania. *Ujamaa*, a Swahili word which means socialism, was the first national ideology initiated by the first president Julius Nyerere through the 'Arusha declaration' in 1967.

Tanzania is now a multi-party country whereby the president, parliament members, and local leaders are democratically elected every five years. Unlike other African countries, Tanzania has managed to keep its political peace and security due to the ability of resolving its internal problems, without resorting to violence. Dodoma, the capital city, with parliamentary activities, is located in the centre of the country. However, most of the government offices including ministry offices are in Dar es Salaam which is the city with the most economic influence.

According to the World Bank, the Tanzanian population is estimated to 43.7 million with 51 percent women and 49 percent men. Only 20 percent of its population lives in urban while the rest live in rural areas practicing agriculture. Like most of the sub Sahara African countries Tanzania also struggles to improve its economy. The main economic sectors include the agriculture sector, manufacturing sector, mining sector as well as tourism. Having approximately 130 ethnic groups, Tanzania has various languages used for communication, but the majority is able to communicate through Kiswahili which is the national language.

English and Kiswahili are both used as the official languages. Christianity and Islam are the main religions practiced in Tanzania

<http://web.worldbank.org/WEBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/TANZANIA>

(Last accessed 16 April 2012).

**Figure 2.1: Map of Tanzania**



Source: <http://www.everyculture.com/sa-Th/Tanzania.html> (last accessed 31 December 2011).

## **2.2 The Tanzanian Education System**

A system refers to “organised components that constitute a whole” (MOEC, 1995:11). The Tanzanian education system comprises of the official education structure and the sequence of education and training levels. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT) is the responsible government body for the provision of education in Tanzania.

Tanzanian education system includes pre-primary education which enrolls children between 3-6 years, primary education, secondary and higher education. Both pre-primary and primary schools include private and public schools. The English language is the medium of instruction in most of the private schools which make them known as “English-medium schools”. Primary education lasts seven years where in the seventh year pupils sit for the primary school leaving examination (PSLE) used as a criterion for selecting pupils to join secondary education from among those who have passed their PSLE.

Secondary education is subdivided into ordinary level (commonly known as O-level) which includes form one to form four. Advanced level (A-level) includes forms five and six. Students, who complete and pass their ordinary level examination (CSEE), can be admitted to the advanced level, to vocational training or to professional training. English is the medium of instruction in secondary education.

Higher or tertiary education comprises of students who have graduated at advanced level of secondary education. The length of programmes in higher education varies from three to five years depending on the course.

## **2.3 Historical Background of Education in Tanzania**

The historical background of education in Tanzania can be presented in three phases: pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial period.

### **2.3.1 Pre-colonial Period**

Before colonial rule, Tanzanian society like other African societies had its way of communicating and transferring skills, values and morals from one generation to another. Skills and knowledge were transformed based on practice and observations. Young generation was taught different skills through songs, storytelling and observation; and through imitation

of the experiences. Nyerere (1968 p.45) explains that pre-colonial African societies did not have formal education, but children and young generation learned through observation and imitation and that education transmitted through oral and practical. Every adult in the society regarded as a teacher to a young generation.

“Education was thus ‘informal’; every adult was a teacher to a greater or lesser degree...lack of formality education did not mean that there was no education, nor did it affect its importance to the society” (Nyerere, 1968:45).

### **2.3.2 Colonial Period**

Tanzania colonised by the Germans and later British in 1880's-1960. Nyerere (1968 p.47) writes that education introduced by the colonial rule aimed to prepare few Africans for white collar job so as to work in the lower post jobs in the colonial administration. Nyerere continues to analyse that colonial education encouraged the inequalities among the society rather than cooperation.

“Colonial education in this country was therefore, not transmitting the values and knowledge of Tanzanian society from one generation to the next; it was a deliberate attempt to change those values and to replace traditional knowledge by the knowledge from different society” (Nyerere, 1968:47).

Writing on the colonial education in Tanzania Buchert (1994) pinpoints, there was an inequality of education provision between different parts of Tanzania. Buchert continues to write that most of the schools were concentrated either in the cash crops plantations, centres of trade or industrial areas. Concerning girls' educations Buchert (1994:17) writes “in the government authority and government- run systems the number of enrolled girls was even lower”.

### **2.3.3 Post Colonial Period**

Tanzania (then Tanganyika) got its independence in 1961. Soon after independence, Tanzania under the first president Julius Nyerere made changes in the education system by introducing education for self reliance policy (ESR). The ESR policy advocated equality, respect for human dignity and cooperation “we want to create a socialist society which is based on three

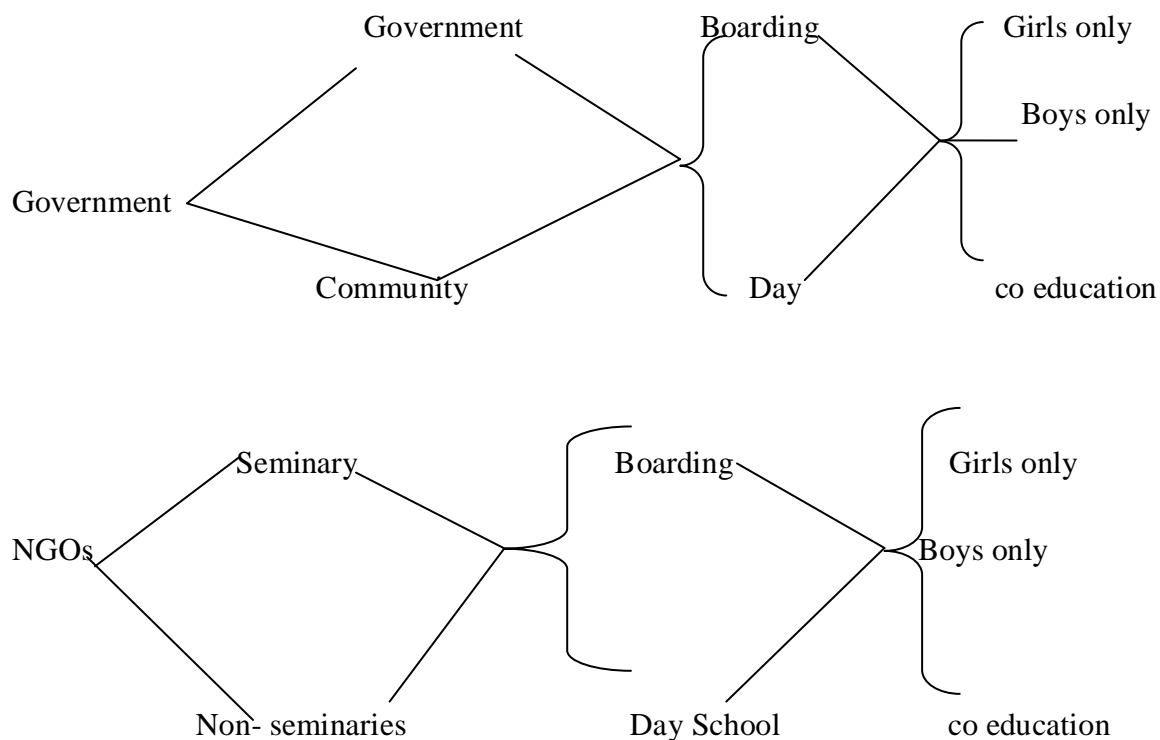
principles: equality and respect for human dignity; sharing of the resources which are produced by our efforts; work by everyone and exploited by none” (Nyerere, 1968:50).

Though the ESR policy emphasised on the equality but, there were some limitations on its implementation such as gender unequal opportunity to education. Buchert (1994:113) writes “in the diversified secondary schools which were created in the early 1980’s, well over half of the girls attended domestic science and commerce but only very few the technical stream”.

## 2.4 Secondary Education Ownership in Tanzania

Secondary education ownership in Tanzania can be grouped into two: government schools and non governments’ schools. Government schools consist of national schools and community secondary schools. Community secondary schools are built by the community but governed and managed by the government. Non government secondary schools can be owned by NGOs, individuals or religion organisations.

**Fig 2.2: Secondary Schools Ownership in Tanzania**



Source: Kanukisya (2012) with author’s modification.



## **2.5 An Overview of Secondary Education Development Plan, SEDP I (2004-2009)**

Secondary education development programme came after the implementation of the Primary education development plan, PEDP (2002-2004). The aims of SEDP were to address the following goals, as set out below under headings 6.4.1-6.4.4.

### **2.5.1 Access Improvement**

This aimed to increase the transition rate from primary to ordinary level secondary school also the transition rate from ordinary level to advanced level secondary school. The access improvement goal according to SEDP plan could be achieved through optimizing utilisation of existing facilities, construction of new schools and optimisation of teachers' utilisation (MOEC, 2004 p.6).

### **2.5.2 Equity Improvement**

The objective aimed to ensure equity of participation across geographical, gender, different disadvantaged groups and income levels so as to achieve balanced and harmonious development. The objectives could be achieved through, supporting construction of schools in underserved areas, improving education for disadvantaged groups and to improve the performance and retention of girls (MOEC, 2004 p.8).

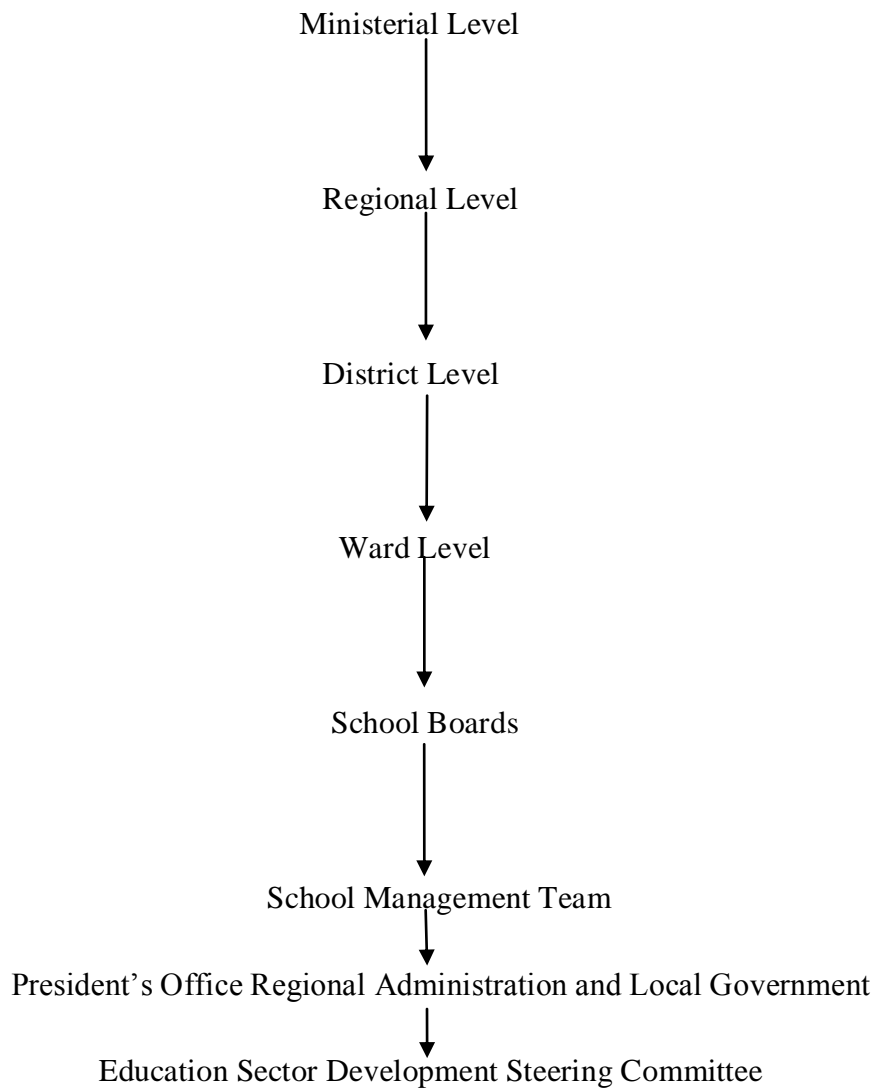
### **2.5.3 Quality Improvement**

The objective of this was to have the market responsive curriculum, with an efficient and effective delivery; this could be done through the curriculum review. Another objective was to have adequate and appropriate teaching and learning materials in all schools. Improve teaching and learning environments and also improving girls' retention and achievements in schools (MOEC, 2004 p.11).

### **2.5.4 Management Reforms**

According to MOEC (2004 p.11), the aim here was to devolve school operation functions to the region, districts and schools so as to reduce bureaucracy in decision making. Another aim is to encourage community participation and increase effectiveness and efficiency of the system.

**Figure 2.3: Distribution of Responsibilities (SEDP Plan)**



Source: Author's construct

**Figure 2.4: Distribution of the Responsibilities (SEDP Plan)**

Level	Responsibilities
Ministerial Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and implementation of the education and training policy</li> <li>• Preparation of curriculum</li> <li>• Mobilisation and allocation of resources</li> </ul>
Regional Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate education development plans of district</li> <li>• Supervise education development in the region</li> <li>• Appoint school board members</li> </ul>
District Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate and establishment of new schools</li> <li>• Construction of school buildings</li> <li>• Hire and fire non-technical, non-teaching staff for schools</li> </ul>
Ward Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of location for building and construction of schools</li> <li>• Mobilisation of the communities for construction, enrolment and retention of students</li> <li>• Monitoring of school construction and provide feedback to the district</li> </ul>
School Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee implantation of school development plans</li> <li>• Approve school development plans and budgets</li> <li>• Deal with disciplinary cases of students</li> </ul>

School Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage day to day affairs of the school</li> <li>• Prepare school development plans and budgets</li> <li>• Quality assurance for new constructions and maintenance</li> </ul>
President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate as a joint stakeholder in the education sector development programme (ESDP) processes</li> <li>• Collaborate with MOEC in monitoring of implementation of SEDP</li> </ul>
Education Sector Development Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the implementation, development and execution of decisions related to national education policies</li> <li>• Monitor the education sector development programme (ESDP) which is, the overall framework for the development of the education system covering all education subsectors.</li> <li>• Oversee review process of the plan</li> </ul>

Source: Author's construct, 2012.

#### **2.5.4.1 School Management Team**

It comprises of the head of school, assistant head of school, senior academic master or mistresses, school discipline master/mistresses also senior master in sports and cultural affairs, maintenance and projects master/mistresses as well as school accountant (MOEC, 2004 p.15)

### **2.5.5 Achievements of SEDP**

The SEDP programme has helped to increase numbers of secondary schools in Tanzania, whereby, the establishment of more secondary schools means more secondary education opportunities to children. From 2004-2008, a total number of 2507 secondary schools were built (URT cited in Makombe et al., p.17).

SEDP has increased access to secondary education and transition rate from primary education to secondary education. Form 1 enrolment has increased between 2004-2008 from 147,470 to 438,901 and the transition rate from primary to secondary education from 20 percent to 50 percent (Makombe et al., 2010 p.17).

SEDP has also improved the education equity among the Tanzanian communities. More community secondary schools have been built in different areas including remote areas, this means, more education opportunities to the girls and marginalised children. Makombe et al., (2010 p.31) giving an example of equity writes, in Morogoro region, the percent of girls selected to join form one rose from 47.9 percent in 2003 to 51.6 percent in 2004.

Decentralisation of secondary education management under SEDP has increased the efficiency of the management. With decentralisation administration, districts secondary education officers can handle matters concerning secondary education.

### **2.5.6 Challenges of SEDP**

Shortage of teachers is among the challenge faced by the newly constructed secondary schools under SEDP. There has been a massive enrolment of students, but the training of teachers remains low. Makombe et al., (2010 p.20) reveals that in most of community secondary schools teacher-student ratio was 1:29 in 2006 and 1:37 in the year 2008. Poor quality of education manifests in community secondary schools under SEDP whereby there is a shortage of laboratories, libraries and books. However, most of schools are still in construction.

Academic performances are lower in many of the community secondary schools good example is sample schools used in the study which all of them are community schools under SEDP.

## **2.6 Education and Training Policy (1995)**

A new Tanzanian education and training policy was introduced in 1995. The Tanzanian government through its education and training policy emphasises three main issues which are access, equity and participation when referring to girls' education.

### **2.6.1 Access**

MOEC (1995:17) explains access as, "the opportunities available to the target population to participate". In order to ensure access to education for girls in Tanzania, MOEC (1995) writes that the government shall implement different policies to ensure girls get access to education and such policies include:

- Government shall guarantee access to pre-primary and primary education and adult literacy to all citizens as a basic right.
- Government shall promote and ensure the equitable distribution of educational institutional.
- The establishment of co-education and girls secondary schools shall be promoted and encouraged.
- Government shall establish special educational financial, support schemes for girls and women education and training institutions (MOEC, 1995: 18-19).

UNESCO (2008 p.26) in one of its EFA global monitoring reports, writes that access to education is the opportunity or right to education and that, opportunity to secure these rights may be influenced by various factors, such as home background, family income, gender or ethnicity. On my point of view, it is not enough to speak about opportunity or right to education when referring to access to education, but more emphasis should be focused on the equal rights and opportunities to quality education to all children regardless gender, location or income background.

### **2.6.2 Equity**

Equity is defined as an equal opportunity, fairness and social justice (UNESCO, 2008 p.24), whereas MOEC (1995:17) explains equity as “the fairness in distribution and allocation of education resources to various segments of the society”. The question here remains, is there equity for girls’ in education in Tanzania? Are the education resources equitably distributed between rural and urban areas? Do the Tanzanian girls have equitable opportunity to secondary education? In order to ensure equity in education for both boys and girls in Tanzania, MOEC (1995:22) writes: “government shall ensure that adequate resources are made available and provided to enhance access and equity in education”.

### **2.6.3 Participation**

UNESCO (2008: 108) writes: “...the ultimate purpose of schooling is to provide children with an education that equips them with skills, knowledge and wider perspectives they need to participate fully in the social, economic and political lives of their countries”. In order to achieve that, it is necessary to ensure children’s full participation in education. Therefore, UNESCO’s global monitoring report analyses retention, and completion as well learning outcomes as vital when referring to access and participation (UNESCO, 2008 p.64). Additionally participation can be explained in terms of children’s participation in school activities. In this case, this study looks how girl students participate in education, particularly secondary education, and how they participate in school activities inside and outside the school environment. The study also explore if there are conditions or environments which limit them from fully participating in the school activities. In order to ensure girls’ participation in education in Tanzania, MOEC (1995:20) writes:

- The school curriculum shall be reviewed in order to strengthen and encourage participation and achievement of girls in mathematics and science subjects.
- Education and school system shall eliminate gender stereotyping through the curricular, text-books and classroom practices.
- Government shall encourage the construction of hostel/boarding accommodation for girls in day secondary schools.

## **2.7 Gender Policy (2000)**

Tanzania gender policy was issued in 1992 and reviewed in the year 2000. Among objectives of this policy are (p.7-10) (translated from Swahili language) are the following:

- To establish gender equality and equal opportunities in the development opportunities.
- To enable and empower women to use the available resources for their development and the society at large.
- To encourage and promote gender equality in government and private sectors.
- To bring awareness and educate the society on the principals of gender equality.

### **2.7.1 Gender Policy with Girls' Education**

In order to eliminate gender discrimination and promote equality in education, the Tanzanian gender policy recommends that the education policies ensure:

- More enrolment of girls in secondary and tertiary education.
- Measures to be taken against the dropping out of schools of girls, such as girls should not be expelled due to pregnancy, more dormitories to be built to ensure safety of the studying environment for girls.
- The education curriculum should be reviewed to eliminate all stereotypes against girls.
- Parents and communities to be educated on the importance of education to girls (Tanzania gender policy, 2000 p.18).

### **2.7.2 Gender Policy and Traditional Customs and Practices**

On the traditional customs and practices in relation to women, the policy encourages elimination of some of the harmful traditions towards girls such as female genital circumcision. The policy also brings awareness on the Tanzanian society on the importance of women's participation in economic activities.



## **2.8 Girls in Secondary Education in Tanzania**

Despite the efforts made by the government concerning girls' secondary education, there seems to be slow progress in access to, and participation of girls in secondary education especially in the rural areas. Factors related to social, cultural, political and economic conditions slow down the improvement of participation of girls in rural Tanzania. About 80 percent of Tanzanian citizens are living in rural areas. Most of this rural population is characterised by a high level of poverty. Most people are small/ poor peasants' households with low income, low levels of education among the adults or no formal education at all. Although the Tanzanian government has established cheap community secondary schools at every ward in the rural and urban areas, there is still unequal distribution of educational resources between urban and rural areas. Rural secondary schools are characterised by a shortage of teaching materials and by shortage of teachers. Most of the teachers are discouraged from working in rural areas with no social services with regard to housing, water, health and electricity. Girls from most of rural areas in Tanzania are deprived of the education services compared to urban girls. According to the ministry of education data (BEST, 2010), the Gross Enrolment Ratio and Net Enrolment Ratio are higher for boys than for girls.

According to Basic Education Statistics of Tanzania (BEST, 2010) Both GER and NER have been increasing from 2006 to 2010, as shown in table 2.1 below. This means that over the five years (2006 - 2010), the rate of enrolling students at official schooling age has improved. However, both NER and GER for male students are higher than those of females. The NER gap between male and female students in the table 2.1 was little in forms 1&4 and much noticeable in higher forms, where the rate of boys is much higher. This situation may reflect the government initiatives of recruiting more girls to enter secondary education than boys, however, the table can suggest that either girls drop out more than boys in the transition to higher grades or simply don't perform better to continue with advanced level.

Table 2.1 : Summary of Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios for Secondary Education, 2006 - 2010

Grade	Indicator	2006			2007			2008			2009			2010		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Form 1 - 4	NER	12,4	14,3	13,4	20,0	21,5	20,7	24,5	24,3	24,4	29,7	28,5	29,1	31,8	29,9	30,8
	GER	21,0	19,3	20,2	32,0	29,0	30,5	39,7	32,6	36,2	47,8	39,3	43,6	52,0	42,6	47,3
Form 5 - 6	NER	1,1	0,9	1,0	1,3	0,6	0,9	1,6	1,3	1,4	1,4	1,5	1,5	2,1	1,8	1,9
	GER	4,1	2,4	3,2	4,7	2,8	3,7	5,1	2,9	4,0	5,2	3,6	4,4	5,7	3,8	4,8
Form 1 - 6	NER	13,6	12,6	13,1	21,7	19,6	20,6	25,8	21,2	23,5	30,6	25,1	27,8	32,2	27,5	29,9
	GER	16,0	13,7	14,8	23,9	20,3	22,1	29,5	22,8	26,1	35,3	27,4	31,3	37,5	30,4	34,0

Source: Basic education statistics of Tanzania, (BEST, 2010).

Pregnancy and early marriages are mentioned by the government of Tanzania in its education and training policy MOEC (1995 p.19) as the threatening factors to the secondary education of girls. The Tanzania ministry of education statistics, of 2010, shows that pregnancy contributed to 20.4% of girls' drop out of secondary schools. Girls' dropping out of school because of pregnancy is a common problem in both urban and rural areas though it occurs more frequently in rural areas. Most of the girls are in their adolescent age when they start secondary schools. Lack of transparency and communication between parents and their children and ineffective sexual education in schools make the situation worse. Thus, the education concerning sexuality is necessary, so girls can be more responsible in a relationship. In the rural areas girls' early pregnancies are related to such cultural practices as early marriages.

**Table 2.2 : Frequency of Student Dropout by Reason and Grade in Government and Non-Government Secondary Schools, 2009**

Reasons	Grade						Total
	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Form 5	Form 6	
Truancy	1363	3580	3340	2883	64	34	11264
Pregnancy	674	1927	1962	1751	17	14	6345
Death	264	668	578	494	17	9	2030
Unable to meet basic needs	725	1371	1158	1054	21	15	4344
Illness	182	502	473	480	20	25	1682
Parental Illness	51	86	136	80	10	10	373
Others	985	1493	1410	1102	83	30	5103
Total	4244	9627	9057	7844	232	137	31141

Source: BEST (2010).

According to Basic Education Statistics of Tanzania (BEST, 2010), the dropout in secondary schools was higher in ordinary level than in advanced level classes, as shown in Table 2.2. This suggests that dropouts tend to occur in early years of the course. Furthermore, the table shows high number of drop outs in low level, this can suggest the higher number of students enrolled in low levels of secondary education than in high levels. The main reason for dropouts is truancy (36.2%) followed by pregnancies (20.4%). However, the table does not specify clearly 'unable to reach basic needs' reason to drop out of school, could it mean lack of income to meet basic needs due to poverty?

## **2.9 Traditional Customs and Practices**

Having more than 120 ethnic groups, Tanzania has a variety of traditions customs and practices. Among the traditions and practices are traditional dances, puberty initiation rites and ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, harvesting ceremonies and female genital mutilation. Practices of these traditions and customs vary from one ethnic group to another and from one geographical location to another. Though traditional practices may play a significant role in unifying people belonging to the same group, they sometimes can lead to negative effects. Early marriages, female genital mutilation and son preference discriminate against a girl child and can ruin her future.

### **2.9.1 Traditional Customs and Practices in Morogoro Region**

Morogoro region is divided into six administrative districts of Kilosa, Kilombero, Ulanga, Mvomero, Morogoro rural and Morogoro urban. Tradition customs and practices in Morogoro region vary according to the ethnic groups. The ethnic groups in Morogoro include waluguru, wakaguru, wandamba and wapogoro as it will be shown in chapter five. Traditions customs and practices of Morogoro region mentioned by the respondents during field work for this thesis include: puberty initiation rites and ceremonies, gender division of domestic works, son preference and early marriages (to be discussed more in chapter 6).

## Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This chapter presents the theoretical framework and literature review. The chapter is divided into two main sections with further subsections. Section one is the introductory part followed by the theory discussion. Section two focuses the presentation of literature review related to the study.

Widening access to education has become a major educational policy goal in most of the developing countries since the Dakar conferences of the year 2000. However, women's education still lags behind men's in most countries (King and Hill, 1993:1). Without education, girls are denied their full potential of productive and development roles in their families and society. A World Bank report of (2008:31) states:

*“Investing in women's education is being increasingly understood as a way of rapidly enhancing the development of African communities which are in turn being acknowledged as the fulcrum for sustainable development”.*

The positive results of educating a girl child includes improved family health, reduced child mortality rate, promoting and enhancing children education, reducing fertility rate as well as improved women's economy resources in family and at the community level. UNESCO (2002 p.65) also comments that girls' education is a necessary means of breaking patterns of economic deprivation and dependence. One way to create equalization between men and women in society is to have an equal quality education for both genders.

Despite the significance efforts of most developing countries to widen educational access to girls, there are still some disparities regarding various education issues between girls and boys especially at the secondary level (World Bank, 2008). The inequality in secondary education may be caused by such factors as the presence of school fees which automatically reduce the access for lower income people, especially from rural areas. Socio-cultural factors such as son preference which is common to most of African parents, and selectivity in access to secondary education, which requires the prior passing of primary school examination, create disadvantage for girls due to gender inequality in primary education.

### **3.1 Theoretical Framework**

The following section will focus on the presentation of the “ecological system theory” which guided my study.

#### **3.1.1 Ecological System Theory**

The theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) who argues that the environment in which a child lives plays a vital role in his/her learning development. He explains “Development never takes place in a vacuum; it is always embedded and expressed through behaviour in a particular environmental context” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:27). He accordingly writes that the effective way for studying a child’s-human development is to study the settings with which she/ he interacts (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 p.22). Bronfenbrenner categorises four structure settings: the micro system, mesosystem, exosystem and macro system. He suggests that these four systems or settings are interrelated to one another in the following way: “the ecological environment is conceived topographically as a nested arrangement of concentric structures, each contained within the next” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979: 22).

*Microsystem* is described by Bronfenbrenner as the smallest and the innermost setting level. It is the first setting in which the child is encountered and socialised. This setting can define the roles, activities and interpersonal relationship of the child with other people. Home and family unit are categorised into this setting level.

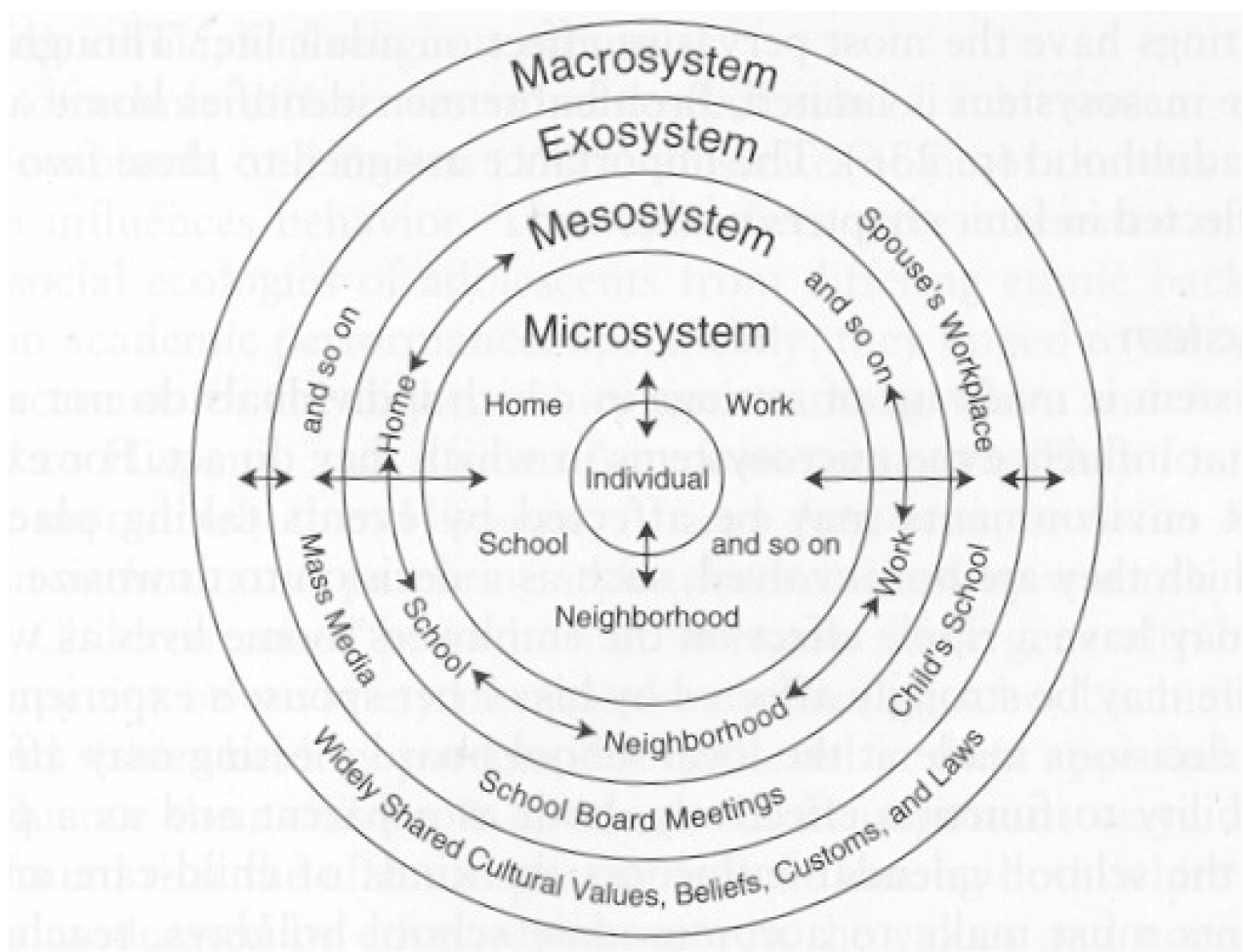
*Mesosystem* is the next level within the setting structure. It is an interaction between more than one setting in which a person becomes an active participant (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 p.22). Each setting contains roles, norms and rules. The interaction of more than one setting will define and shape the development of an individual. Interaction between school environment and home is one example of this structure. Children’s strong academic performance and development will depend on the good supportive environment, both in the home and at school. Thus, children from families with good income and from supportive families and who attend good schools, tend to perform better than children from poor and less supportive families who attend lower quality schools.

*Exosystem* is the type of setting that does not involve the person directly, but the events happening in this setting can affect the person indirectly (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For

instance, the economic situation of the family can have a positive or negative influence on a child's education, poverty can adversely influence children's education when parents cannot afford direct cost of school or do without the child's labour at home..

*Macrosystem*, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979) is an interlink-age or an overlapping of the setting structures. The actions and decisions in one setting influence the actions and behaviours on another setting. Macrosystem includes political systems, customs, and economic system of society.

**Figure 3.1: Diagram of Ecological System Model**



Source: [www.healthculturesociety.wikispaces.com](http://www.healthculturesociety.wikispaces.com) (last accessed on 8/5/2012).

### **3.1.2 Relevance of the Theory to the Study**

Ecological system theory seems to be a useful guidance theory for the study. The concepts of micro, eco, exo and macro setting systems seem to be relevant and applicable to the study area. Family and home background environment are very important for girls' education development. During the field work discussion, most of the girls mentioned some of family related factors as obstacles to their education. Family poverty, which reduces the chances of girls to be enrolled to school, gender division of roles at home and parent 'son preferences' were mentioned. In the discussion with girls in the field, I found the concept of microsystem setting to be especially applicable, whereby home or family background can influence girls' education positively or negatively. The relationship between family background and school environment plays a significant role to Morogoro girls' secondary education. Family poverty limits girls' chance to school, in that educated parents do value girls' education more than do uneducated parents. Therefore, Bronfenbrenner's concept of mesosystem was also relevant to the study. During the field study, girls mentioned traditions and customs practices to play a negative role in their education. Though the political system and education policies insist and encourage more girls to participate in education, the society's traditional practices and some beliefs seem to be hindrance, especially in the rural areas.

The human-environment relationship with learning development was relevant to the field study; however, the idea of settings to be arranged into concentric structures and contained within each other as Bronfenbrenner concepts, seem not to be unreliable when I was in the field, in the following manner:

Morogoro girls' secondary education is characterised and influenced by various settings such as home background, school environment, social and economic situations. However, the shortcomings in one setting do not necessarily influence in any determinate manner the decision or roles in another setting. For instance, the study shows there are girls coming from the poor and unsupportive home backgrounds who nonetheless manage to excel in their studies due to supportive school environment and vice versa.

During the field I realised not only that the concept of environment-human relationship is applicable, but also that theory regarding intrinsic and extrinsic motivation may be applicable.



During the discussion, some girls told me that they are focused on achieving their education goals despite challenges. Therefore, the concept of “intrinsic” and “extrinsic” motivation within the “self determination theory” will also be useful in the study.

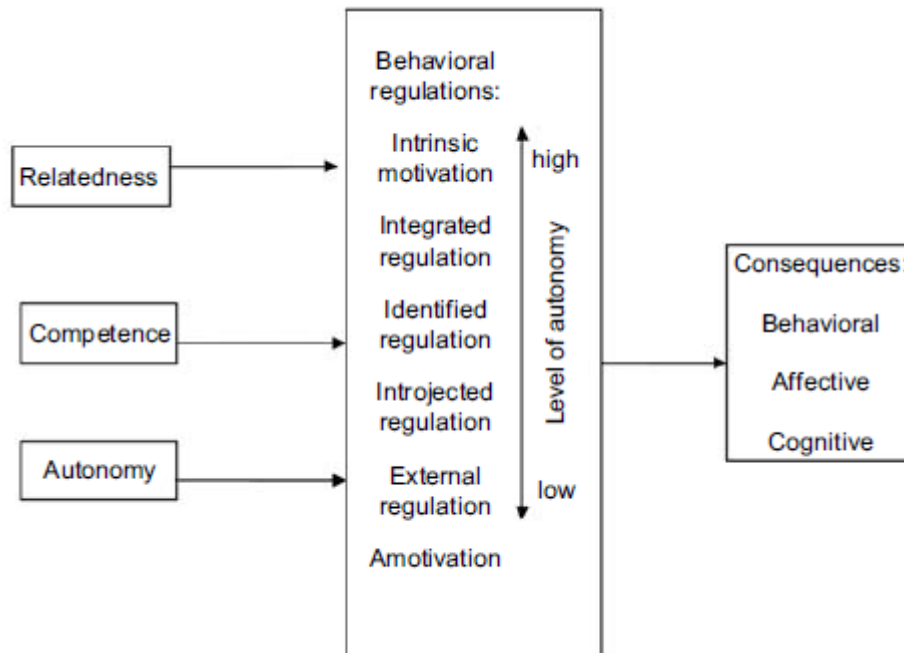
### **3.2 Self Determination Theory**

“...human spirit can be diminished or crushed and... individuals sometimes reject growth and responsibility” (Ryan & Deci, 2000:68).

Self determination theory was developed by Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci professors at the University of Rochester, New York state, in the department of clinical and social sciences in psychology. Self determination theory (SDT) concerns with the motivation behind the choices that people make without any external influences. The innate psychological needs motivate people to be determined and achieve their goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p.230).

SDT maintains the assumptions that “human beings are inherently proactive, that they have potential to act and master both the inner forces (their drives and emotions) and their external (environmental) forces they encounter, rather than being passively controlled by those forces” (Ryan & Deci 1985 cited in Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004:23). Another SDT assumption is that human beings have the inherent tendency towards growth development and towards integrated functioning (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.24); that means their development and growth outcomes are attributed by both genetic endowment and environment. The third assumption of the self determination theory states that “for people to actualise their inherent nature and potentials...they require nutriment from the social environment” (Deci & Vansteenkiste 2004:24). Ryan and Deci (2000 p.230) add the point that the social world can either thwart or support growth and psychological wellbeing, therefore, though one can have potential still needs a supportive environment to reach valued goals.

**Figure 3.2: Self determination theory model in relation to girls' education**



Source: <http://www.google-com/search?q=determination+theory+model&hl> (Accessed 8/5/2012).

### **3.2.1 Psychological Needs**

People are intrinsically motivated to make choices and decisions by their innate psychological needs. Ryan and Deci define psychological needs as “innate psychological nutrients that are essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity and wellbeing” (Ryan & Deci, 2000:229). Deci and Vansteenkiste (2004 p.25) also define psychological needs as universal necessities that are inherent, and that they are not learned. According to Deci and Vansteenkiste (2004 p.25) people tend to focus on doing what they find interesting and important to them, and hence they experience need satisfaction. Psychological needs are essential needs for human wellbeing and psychological health. Through satisfaction of basic psychological needs, the intrinsic motivation is facilitated.

Psychological needs are categorised into three, which is: needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy. The need for competence refers to a person's desire of dealing with the environment effectively (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p.229). The need for competence satisfaction, which leads to intrinsic motivation, can be affected positively or negatively by outside factors such as positive or negative feedbacks. Ryan and Deci (2000 p.235) write that outside factors such as positive feedback can signify the effective satisfaction of the need for competence, likewise, that negative feedbacks tend to thwart the need for competence and hence undermine intrinsic motivation. During discussion with girls in the field study especially in the rural Morogoro, some girls revealed their determination to achieve their education goals despite their unsupportive social environment. Girls mentioned lack of electric power leading them to use kerosene light to do their homework at home. Girls also mentioned surviving with one meal or starving at school, due to lack of food or money to buy lunch. Great distance to school from home was found also to be barrier conditions for girls to survive in education. However, girls in Morogoro told me that they are determined to deal effectively with the environment so as to reach their education dreams. The need to be connected, for belonging and to interact to other people is described as a need for relatedness. Intrinsic motivation will be more likely to flourish in a context characterised by a sense of secure relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p. 235). The need for autonomy is a universal urge of an individual to be a causal agent of her/his own life (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.25). To be autonomous means to feel a sense of willingness and choice when acting, and is expressed when people act according to their interest and values (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.25). During the discussion, with the girls in the field, most girls showed they were intrinsically motivated to study. Their own reason was to have a better life in the future. According to the girls, education is the main available tool for empowerment in their lives.

### **3.2.2 Intrinsic Motivation in Relation to Psychological Needs and Life Goals**

People are motivated intrinsically to make choices and decisions basing on their inner psychological needs. Intrinsically motivated activities are those activities that individuals find interesting and will do in the absence of external consequences or rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p.233). Deci & Vansteenkiste (2004:26) also define intrinsic motivated behaviours as “those that are not energized by physiological drives or their derivatives and for which the reward is the spontaneous satisfaction associated with the activity itself rather than with operationally separable consequences”. People are motivated to engage in activities in order

to experience a sense of being effective, joy and to feel a sense of personal causation (White, 1959, de Charms, 1968 cited in Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.26). Satisfaction of psychological needs lead to intrinsic motivation; likewise intrinsic motivation behaviours allow the satisfaction of psychological needs. Psychological needs can determine the life goals people are setting: “At the core of the goal-setting process are people’s basic needs, and the extent to which they have been able to satisfy these needs affect the life goals they tend to hold for themselves” (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004:30). However, life goals of different individuals vary considerably with the influence of both personal and environmental factors (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.30). When the intrinsic motivation is thwarted by external factors, people tend to internalise the extrinsic rewards so as to reinforce motivation.

### **3.2.3 Internalisation of Extrinsic Motivation**

Extrinsic motivation is the situation in which peoples’ behaviour is controlled by specific external contingencies (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p.236). External consequences include rewards and punishments or deadlines, and tend in their view to decrease the intrinsic behaviours. Deci (1975 cited in Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.26) writes that intrinsically motivated behaviours when extrinsically motivated seem to make participants lose their sense of autonomy. However, when the internal motivation behaviours get thwarted by the external contingencies, people tend to internalise the external regulations so as to achieve their goals. Internalisation of extrinsic motivation is the situation through which “individuals assimilate and reconstitute formerly external regulations, so the individuals can be self determined while enacting them” (Ryan & Deci 2000: 236).

#### **3.2.3.1 External Regulation**

This is the type of regulations in which peoples’ behaviours are controlled by external contingencies (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p.236). In this regulation, people behave in a certain way in order to achieve the tangible rewards or avoid consequences. In this type of internalisation, the behaviour is taken by a person but not accepted as his/ her own (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.28). During the field work discussions, some girls told me how they cope with unsupportive social environments in order to reach their education goals, for instance they revealed how they have to work hard and quickly at house works so they can obtain time to do their school home works. Girls said that it is very difficult to concentrate on their studies

after such home chores, but they have to do so in order for them to achieve their academic goals. Passing or failure of the examinations is an example of external reinforcements to the Morogoro girls.

### **3.2.3.2 Introjections Regulation**

It is the external regulations of behaviour which comes from the individuals themselves. It is the type of the behaviour regulated by the external factors but the pressures comes from within a person (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004 p.28). Self worth, threat of guilt or shame can be the external contingencies which reinforce people to regulate their behaviours. Introjections represent a partial internalisation, in which regulations in a person have not really become part of the integrated set of motivation.

### **3.2.3.3 Identification**

In this process, people fully internalise the external regulations, and they accept and identify with the behaviour values as their own (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p.236). After the regulation, behaviour becomes part of the identity of the person and thus more autonomous but not it is not intrinsic because it is not done for interest, rather it is done for external reasons. Example of this is some of the Morogoro secondary school girls who believe studying hard will lead to pass an examination and hence better future lives.

### **3.2.3.4 Integration**

This is the fullest, most complete form of internalisation of extrinsic motivation. It involves identifying important behaviours and integrating those behaviours to oneself life (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p. 236). According to Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 236), external regulation will be fully transformed into self regulation, and the result is self determined extrinsic motivation. An example is when a person internalises the physical exercising for the good of one's health, or when students internalise the behaviour of studying hard so as to get better future lives by succeeding in school.

## **3.2.4 Relevance of the Theory to a Study**

Self determination theory partly applies to the situation of many girls in Morogoro. During the field work discussion, some girls revealed that they are autonomously motivated for their

studies. Girls showed their determination to achieve their education goals despite the unsupportive environments to their education. However, Morogoro secondary school girls revealed that they regulate themselves in keeping with external contingencies so as to reach their career dreams. They are motivated to study hard so as to pass their examinations and avoid failure, girls believes studying hard lead to achieving academic goals and a successful career. Education enables a person to become a successful independent woman who is free from oppression. Therefore, the girls are pressured from within to study hard.

### **3.3 Related Empirical Studies**

The topic of the study, purpose and theoretical framework provided me with an insight of what literature I needed to review. In my search, I encountered much literature related to girls' education in the world, Africa and Tanzania in particular. Nonetheless it was not easy to find materials directly related to the topic of "the influences of traditional customs and practices on girls' secondary education in Tanzania". However, most of the studies reviewed in one way or another analysed factors affecting girls' education status, and in some studies traditional practices are among the factor mentioned to influence girls' education.

#### **3.3.1 Socio-Cultural Factors**

In sub Saharan African countries, traditional practices are mentioned in some studies as an important constraint on girls' education. A study by Mbilinyi/FAWE (2003 p.16) asserts that most of the traditional practices in SSA countries are outdated and need to be changed, and she sees education as the only agent for that change. Early marriages, initiation rites and ceremonies and preferences for boy children over girls, are mentioned as having negative effects on girls' education. Colclough (2003:151) writes that "during discussion in Tanzania, teachers mentioned that girls interest in schooling declined dramatically particularly after being initiated". On the other hand, the 2008 World Bank report, notes that the fear which some parents have of their daughters to be impregnated while in school, leads to pull their daughters out of school to be married. The 2003 UNESCO EFA monitoring report (UNESCO, 2003) mentions that gender division of labour in home favours boys. More domestic chores are assigned to girls, which in turn leaves them tired and unable to concentrate on studies later in the day.

### **3.3.2 Other Barriers to Girls' Education**

Apart from traditional practices factors, the studies point to other factors that are responsible for girls' education setbacks in Africa, and in Tanzania in particular.

#### **3.3.2.1 Economic Factors**

The literature shows that socio-economic factors also impact on girls' education in SSA countries. Family poverty is mentioned as a barrier for girls to attend schools. Colclough et al. (1999 p.3) notes that poor families in the SSA countries cannot afford school costs, and that when it comes to educating children with a limited budget, boys tend to be favoured over girls. However, Colclough et al., (1999 p.4) also argue that the gendered outcomes of under enrolment of girls are caused more by cultural practices rather than poverty as such.

#### **3.3.2.2 Parents Education Background**

“The higher the education levels of mother, the greater her influence on the daughters' academic plan,” (King & Hill, 1993:32). Different studies reveal that the educational opportunity of girls is more equal to that of boys when parents are more educated. Educated parents value education more and see it as important for both their daughters and their sons.

#### **3.3.2.3 School Related Factors**

King & Hill (1993) write that greater distance to school reduces the chances of girls relative to boys, to attend school. Some parents perceive long distance to expose their daughters to greater risk of moral destructions. UNESCO (2003) notes that in most of the SSA countries, poor school infrastructure limit girls' full participation in education. Poor latrines, shortage of water and lack of privacy especially during their periods, have a negative impact on girls' education.

### **3.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented theories that have explained different perspectives in relation to the study. The ecological system theory, which explains the human-environment relationship, has been presented. The theory suggests that girls environments which are social or economic can have a negative or positive influence in their studies. Self determination theory also has been

presented in relation to the study. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation concepts have been explained in relation to the study. Secondary school girls in Morogoro region revealed to be autonomous motivated to achieve their educational goals. Further, the chapter presented different empirical studies done in different places related to the topic of the study.



## **Chapter 4: Methodology**

This chapter presents the research procedures and methods. It starts by discussing the research design used and the reasons for choosing such designs. The chapter continues to describe the area of the study, sample and sampling procedures. Further discussions on data collection procedures and analysis, apart from that trustworthiness and ethical consideration will be analyzed.

### **4.1 Research Design**

Yin (2009:26) defines a research design “as the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and ultimately to its conclusions”. It is a framework of the study which contains what to be studied, how to collect data and what and how the conclusion should be. According to the purpose and nature of the study, a qualitative research design has been used. Strauss & Corbin (1998:11) write: “...qualitative methods can be used to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thoughts processes and emotions...” With a qualitative research method, in the present study it was possible to study girls’ emotions, feelings and gestures at the time when they were interviewed.

According to nature of the topic, the case study design was adopted. According to Bryman (2008:52) a case study design “entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case”. Yin (2003 p.13) writes that a case study research design is an empirical inquiry- study that focuses on the contemporary phenomena in its real context. The aim of employing a case study design in my study was to study the case intensively in order to get detailed information.

### **4.2 Research Site and the Rationale for Selection**

This study was conducted in two districts of Morogoro region namely urban Morogoro and Kilombero district. Two urban-secondary schools of Lupanga and Kola Hill secondary schools and two rural- secondary schools of Nyandeo and Cane-growers secondary schools were selected. These schools were selected because of their population diversity from different background. My experience of growing up in the area and later working as a teacher motivated me to carry out the study concerning girls’ education in relation to traditional customs and practices.

### **4.3 Sample and Sampling Procedures**

This study used the purposive sampling technique. Silverman (2005:129) explains purposive sampling technique as: “to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested”. The sample used in this study include 2 teachers, head teachers and subject teachers from each secondary school, 10 Form 1 girl students from each secondary school, with 5 girls from Form 1A and 5 from Form 1B from each school. The choice of studying a group of 5 girls at a time helped me to facilitate discussions and hence get detailed information. Patton (2002) notes, that a small group allows the researcher to study group in depth. It was of useful to include heads of schools in the sample because they have important information concerning the schools and students daily activities. Furthermore, it was essential to include subject teachers in the sample due to their daily experience with girl students. However, after I finished collecting data in the field, I realized that boy students were potential samples too, as they have experiences with girls as their peers and siblings at home.

### **4.4 Data Collection Techniques**

Various data collection techniques were adopted. The data collection methods were selected with regard of their ability to serve the purposes of the study and their flexibility of use.

#### **4.4.1 Interview**

“We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe...we cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions” (Patton 2002: 340). Brymann (2008: 437) also suggests that: “Qualitative interviewing tends to be flexible, responding to the direction in which interviewee take the interview and perhaps adjusting the emphases in the research...”

I used interview as data collection method, it allowed me to pose some follow up questions to gain more understanding. It was also possible to take account of respondents’ facial expressions.

#### **4.4.2 Semi-structured Interview**

Unlike structured interview which has to follow a clearly specified set and sequence of questions, the use of semi structured interview allowed me to be more flexible, sometimes

going beyond the interview guides so as to get more information. In a semi-structured research interview, a researcher has a list of questions or topics to be covered which are regarded as the interview guides (Bryman 2008 p.438). In this study, I employed semi-structured interview with the teachers to get their views concerning girls' education in relation traditional customs and practices. To make this happen I prepared the semi structured interview guides in the Kiswahili language, thus to make free expressions by the respondents more possible than if English had been used. Kiswahili is the national language of Tanzania and is widely used.

#### **4.4.2.1 Storage of Interview Data**

Interviews were recorded with an audio tape recorder. I also used my note book to record key points, gestures, expressions and emotions. After every interview session, I spend time to review my notes and listen to the recorded interview.

#### **4.4.2.2 Challenges in Using Interview Method**

During the interview, I faced some challenges. At first I was a bit nervous because it was my first experience of conducting interviews, but later my confidence gained momentum. However, it was a bit of a challenge for me to restrain my own emotions when I encountered emotional respondents.

#### **4.4.3 Focus Group Interview**

Focus group interview was used to collect data from girls concerning the influence of traditional customs and practices on their education. Patton (2002: 385) explains a focus group method as: "an interview with a small group of people on a specific topic". Bryman (2008:473) writes on focus group interview that it is "interested in the way in which individuals discuss a certain issue as a member of a group, rather than simply as individuals". Patton (2002:386) writes that "In focus group participants get to hear each others' responses and to make additional comments beyond their own original responses as they hear what other people have to say". However, Patton notes that, it is not necessary for participants to agree with each other or to reach any consensus, but neither it is necessary that they disagree; the main thing is to get high quality data on how participants consider their own views in the context of others' views. Using a group focus interview in the field has also other advantages.

Patton (2002) points out that, focus group interview is a cost effective method of data collection because, it helps a researcher collect many detailed data within a short time and that the quality of data usually is enhanced due to interaction between the participants. A focus group interview method also tends to be enjoyable to use, as participants are free to interact and discuss a given topic. However, a focus group interview method also has some limitations. If a researcher or moderator is not careful, the discussion may be dominated by a few talkative participants. Loss of focus is common. As a moderator, I had to facilitate the group to make sure they would not stray from the topic of study. There is also a possibility of unduly limiting the wideness and depth of discussion of the topic due to the time limit. Another limitation is that the respondents may not divulge very private views or experiences in front of their peers. In this study; a total of 8 group interview sessions were conducted, 2 focus group sessions from each secondary school, each group consisting of 5 girls students.

#### **4.4.4 Documentary Analysis**

Yin (1994 p.80) notes that no single source of data has a complete advantage over all others, and that a good research study will want to use as many sources as possible. In examining the influences of traditional customs and practices on girls' secondary education, I analysed documents with relevant information. These were documents on Tanzania education and training policy, different journals, books and different school reports and records like examinations reports. The documents extracted were useful complements to interviews and focus group interview.

#### **4.5 Data Analysis**

Patton (2002) simply defines qualitative data analysis as the process of transforming data into findings; he further writes that data analysis is the process of transforming interviews, observations, documents and field notes into findings (p. 432). Thus data analysis is the process of reducing the volume of raw data into communicative information. After collection, data were transcribed and translated; the audio recorded data were transcribed and then translated from Kiswahili to English. The process of transcribing and translating data helped me to become more familiar with, and get a deeper understanding of the data. Patton (2002 p.441) notes that, the process of transcription provides an opportunity to the researcher to get immersed in the data. After data transcription, they were categorised into different categories

such as their source: girl students', head teachers or subject teachers. Furthermore, the data were assembled to suit the research themes. Later, data assessment was undertaken to arrive at findings for interpretations.

## **4.6 Validity and Reliability**

There is a debate concerning whether validity and reliability should be used as assessment criteria in qualitative research. Validity has been related to quantitative research due to its measurements characteristics. It refers to "whether you are observing, identifying or measuring what you say you are" (Mason 1996: 24 cited in Bryman 2008: 376).

External validity which refers to the degree, to which findings can be generalised across settings, is unlike to be met in qualitative research due to the tendency to employ small case sample (LeCompte & Goetz 1982 cited in Bryman 2008 p. 376). Additionally, external reliability in the sense that a study can be replicated, is a difficult criterion to be meet in qualitative research because it is impossible to 'freeze' the social setting and the circumstances of the initial study.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) came up with trustworthiness and authenticity as alternative evaluation criteria for qualitative research. They argue that trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirm ability are equivalent to validity and reliability criterion in quantitative research.

### **4.6.1 Credibility**

This is parallel to internal validity, which means a good match between a researcher's observation and the theoretical ideas they develop (Bryman 2008). Credibility is the feasibility or integrity of the account that a researcher arrives at, and that is going to determine its acceptability to others (Bryman 2008 p. 377). Credibility in general is the integrity or reliability of the findings a researcher arrives at in a study. In order to ensure credibility of finding, a researcher may want to use respondent validation or triangulation techniques.

#### **4.6.1.2 Respondent Validation**

Respondent validation is defined as: "process whereby a researcher provides the people on whom he or she has conducted research with an account to his or her findings" (Bryman

2008:377). Though the goal of respondent validation is to seek credibility of the findings, it may lead to some challenges such as defensive reactions to research findings on the part of research participants. On the other hand, research feedbacks from respondents may sometimes limit a researcher from being critical in the findings towards the organisation concerned, due to the cooperation received during the study. Bloor cited in Bryman (2008 p.45) observes that some approaches to inquiry may result in a research participant developing a relationship of fondness and mutual regard with the researcher and the researcher may therefore show reluctance to be critical.

#### **4.6.1.3 Triangulation**

Triangulation is the technique which “entails using more than one method or source of data in the study of social phenomena” (Bryman 2008:379). Denzin (1978b cited in Patton 2002) describes four types of triangulation techniques: (1) *data triangulation* which is the use of a variety of data sources in a study, (2) *investigator triangulation* which is the use of more than one researcher or evaluator, (3) *theory triangulation* this is the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data, and (4) *methodological triangulation* which is the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or phenomena. Other types of triangulation techniques are analyst triangulation, which is using more than one analyst to review findings, and theory/perspective triangulation whereby multiple perspectives or theories are used to interpret the data (Patton, 2002 p. 556). In general triangulation is the consistency of findings across methods and data sources.

#### **4.6.1.4 Ensuring Credibility of the Findings**

In order to ensure credibility of the study, I sought to ensure rigor or systematic methods for doing my study. I followed all necessary research procedures before field work, which includes selecting the topic of study, review literature related to the study, writing a proposal of the study including all research procedure and research ethics considerations. During the field work, I systematically administered methods of data collection which include interviews, focus group interview and documents analysis. In order to ensure the quality of findings I had to follow systematic procedures to collect data, such as having interview guides (as it was semi-structured interview), establishing rapport during the study and concentrating on ‘in depth’ interviews with a small number of group participants. Other strategies I applied while

in the field to ensure credibility include comparing and cross-checking data from interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis to ensure consistency of the findings. Patton (2002) mentions credibility of the researcher as an important element to credibility of the findings. In order, to ensure that, I had prior training on how to do a research study. Having personal knowledge and experience of the area of study helped me. However, I sought to be objective and thus to limit personal bias in the findings.

“Technical rigor in the analysis is a major factor in the credibility of qualitative findings” (Patton, 2002:566). Accordingly I sought to analyse and interpret the data collected systematically to ensure the quality of the findings.

#### **4.6.2 Transferability**

Qualitative research findings suffer from generalisation limitations due to small samples which rarely are drawn randomly from a defined larger population. Transferability refers to a situation, in which findings of one study can be applied to another situation or setting. Lincoln and Guba (1985 p.62) proposed the terms ‘transferability and fittingness’ to be used in qualitative findings instead of ‘generalisation’. Transferability is a direct function of the similarity between the two contexts, and fittingness is the degree of congruence between sending and receiving context (Lincoln & Guba 1985 p. 124). In order to meet the transferability criteria, qualitative researchers are encouraged to produce what is called ‘thick description’ of the findings in the sense that there should be accounts that include details of a culture (Geertz 1973 p.24). Cronbach and associates (1980 cited in Patton, 2002 p.584) suggest that the word ‘extrapolation’ be used, which is to go beyond the narrow confines of the data to think about other applications of the findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) write that it is the responsibility of the investigator to provide sufficient thick description of the phenomena so as readers to have a clear enough understanding, to enable them to compare the instances of the described phenomena with their own situation. Thick description refers to the researcher’s task of both describing and interpreting observed social action and behaviour within its particular context (Ponterotto, 2006 p.543). Thick description leads to thick interpretation which in turn leads to thick research findings. Thick meaning of findings leads readers to a sense of verisimilitude wherein they can emotionally place themselves within the research context (Ponterotto, 2006 p.543).

Transferability therefore, substitutes ‘external validity’ in qualitative research to achieve the capacity to generalise, and thick description becomes a means to that end.

#### **4.6.2.1 Ensuring Transferability of the Findings**

Though thick description is the prominent characteristic of ethnography studies, it is still possible to ensure thick description and interpretations in less intensive qualitative case studies. In order to ensure transferability of the study findings, I have in some detail described the procedures and methods used in the study. The setting of the study and participants (informants) will be deeply described in chapter six without compromising the anonymity of participants.

#### **4.6.3 Dependability**

Dependability is an alternative criterion to reliability. It refers to a situation where similar results would be obtained if the study will be repeated in the same context, with the same methods and the same type of participants (Ponterotto, 2006 p.71). It is the consistency of the research findings, if the procedures are repeated. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest researchers to employ the ‘auditing approach’ whereby research records of all phases and procedures are kept, in case of auditing procedures. In addition to that, Ponterotto (2006 p.71) suggests that in order to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail so as to enable the future researcher to repeat the study easily.

Given that a social world is dynamic with the changing phenomena within it, such as culture, economy and politics, it is a challenge to validate the consistency of findings with records which are static.

#### **4.6.4 Confirm ability**

This entails objectivity in the research findings, where a researcher minimizes his/her biases in the study findings. It is a qualitative researcher’s concern to strive for objectivity. In order to ensure objectivity in the study, I have sought to achieve ‘thick description’ of the findings. I have sought to minimise my bias by making sure that the findings are the result of the informants’ information rather than my own preferences and personal experiences.



#### **4.7 Ethical Consideration**

Patton (2002 p.407) suggests that it is especially important to ensure research ethics in qualitative research because of its highly personal and interpersonal, naturalistic inquiry which takes the researcher into the real world where people live.

In order to ensure the ethical principles into my study, I deployed an informed consent which has information about myself and the research. I explained the aims of the study, its methods and the storage of data.

In order to ensure confidentiality, data were registered and reported by numbers rather by real names and the participants were ensured that their names will not be linked in any way with the study or its findings.

Additionally, in order to gain access to research areas, I brought with me a letter of introduction from my university (university of Oslo) and a research permit grant from the Tanzania ministry of education and vocational training.

#### **4.8 Limitation of the Study**

This study faced some limitations and challenges during its implementation. I could not make much use of the observation method due to shortage of time. It would be more useful to be in the field more than two months to observe issues related to the study. Further, for various reasons it was not possible to make a follow up of girl students who drop up schools.

## Chapter 5: Morogoro

### 5.1 Geographical Location and Total Area

Morogoro region is located on the eastern side of Tanzania. It is the second largest region with the total area of 73,039 square kilometres. It covers 7.7 percent of the total area (Morogoro regional commissioner office, 2006). It is the third largest region in Tanzania after Arusha and Tabora.

**Figure 5.1: Map of Tanzania showing Morogoro region**



Source: Morogoro regional commissioner office, 2006.

Morogoro region is divided into the six administrative districts of Morogoro urban, Morogoro rural, Mvomero, Kilombero, Kilosa and Ulanga.

**Figure 5.2: Map of Morogoro Region showing Administrative Districts**



Source: Morogoro regional commissioner office, 2006

## **5.2 Ethnic groups in the districts include,**

- Kilosa: Wakaguru, Wasagara and Wavidunda.
- Kilombero: Wambunga, Wandamba, Wabena and Wahehe.
- Ulanga: Wapogoro, Wandamba, Wangindo, Wabena and Wangoni.
- Morogoro Rural: Waluguru, Wakutu, Wazigua, Wanguu and Wakwere.
- Mvomero: Waluguru, Wakaguru and Wakwere
- Morogoro Urban: Mixed tribes reside in this District as it is highly urbanized (Morogoro region commissioner office, 2006).

**Table 5.1: Distribution of Population by Rural/ Urban Orientation by Districts in Morogoro region, 2002**

<b>District</b>	<b>Rural Areas</b>	<b>Urban Areas</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
Kilosa	374,690	113,501	<b>488,191</b>
Kilombero	230,774	90,837	<b>321,611</b>
Ulanga	168,267	25,013	<b>193,280</b>
Morogoro Rural	255,229	7,783	<b>263,012</b>
Mvomero	229,500	29,847	<b>259,347</b>
Morogoro Urban	21,053	206,868	<b>227,921</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,279,513</b>	<b>473,849</b>	<b>1,753,362</b>

Source: Morogoro regional commissioner's office, 2006.

According to the table 5.1 high populations is concentrated in rural areas of Morogoro region. The research sites consist of some parts of rural and urban areas of Morogoro region. Therefore, it will be interested to see findings in the study on the disparities of traditional customs and practices influences on girls' education between rural and urban districts.

## **5.3 Education Sectors**

### **5.3.1 Primary Education**

The abolition of primary education school fees in 2001 has led the rise in the enrolment in primary school, also in the Morogoro region. The number of primary schools has increased from 778 in 2006 to 825 in 2010, and the total enrolment has increased from 374,710 to 410,924 respectively in the same period (BEST, 2010).

### 5.3.2 Primary School Performance

According to the BEST (2005) regional data, the primary school leaving examination performance is not good compared to other regions. Further, not all students who pass their primary education examination can get a place of study at secondary education, due to shortage of secondary schools facilities like classes, desks and chairs. Data from BEST on (2006) concerning the Morogoro region show that many students do not access a place of study in secondary schools despite their having passed the primary school examination.

**Table 5.2: Number of Pupils Selected (first selection) to Join Form 1 in Public Secondary Schools in Morogoro Region by District 2005**

Districts	Passed				Selected to join secondary school				Not selected		
	B	G	T	%	B	G	T	%	B	G	T
Kilombero	2860	2009	4869	74.0	783	761	1544	31.0	2077	1248	3325
Kilosa	2526	2203	4729	47.1	1726	1715	3451	71.3	800	488	1288
Morogoro Urban	2061	1353	3914	75.7	446	455	921	23.5	1615	1398	2993
Morogoro Rural	1786	1455	3241	60.6	515	503	1018	31.4	1271	952	2223
Mvomero	1389	1341	2720	51.4	653	636	1322	47.3	736	702	1398
Ulanga	1377	855	2232	62.3	345	333	678	20.6	1036	522	1554
<b>Total</b>	<b>11999</b>	<b>9716</b>	<b>21715</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>4468</b>	<b>4406</b>	<b>8874</b>	<b>40.9</b>	<b>7531</b>	<b>5310</b>	<b>12841</b>

B=Boys G=Girls T=Total

Source: Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST) regional statistics: 2006.

According to statistics in table 5.2, half of the pupils who passed their examinations were left out of secondary education. Factors related to schools like classrooms shortages, desks and other factors like social and economic factors might be limitations to access secondary education. Since the year 2006, many initiatives have been made by the government to ensure more pupils are enrolled in secondary education. More community schools have been built in

every ward, and two shifts of studying have been promoted to increase the chances of access for students who have passed their examination to join secondary education. Moreover, the Government has encouraged private partners to establish secondary schools; as a result, more students are getting chances to join secondary education.

### **5.3.3 Secondary Education**

Though the education sector is under the Ministry of education and vocational training, every region has the responsibility to mobilise and organise its resources to ensure access, equity and quality of education. Construction, expansion and buying secondary school facilities are the responsibilities of each region with their districts, under the supervision of the central government (Morogoro region, district office, 2006). In order to expand enrolments of students in secondary education, Morogoro region like other region takes initiatives to ensure more students a chance to join secondary education. In the year, 2006 Morogoro region constructed new 49 secondary schools with 107 streams hence 4280 student were enrolled. Moreover, expansion of classes in existing schools was done so as to allow more students enrolments.

### **5.4 Cooking Energy Resources**

Few households can afford to use electricity energy for cooking due to its high cost and limited supply. Use of charcoal as a source of cooking energy is very common in the urban areas, and firewood in rural areas (Tanzania population and housing census, 2002).

**Table 5.3: Main Sources of Energy for Cooking in Morogoro Region (Households), by Districts, 2002**

Main source of Energy for cooking	Morogoro (Urban	Morogoro Rural	Kilombero	Ulanga	Kilosa	Mvomero
Electricity	886	80	815	10	1,129	188
Paraffin	4,598	367	692	146	982	555
Gas	90	39	23	21	34	26
Firewood	13,791	53,136	56,374	34,479	87,726	49,326
Charcoal	34,594	3,685	15,863	2,380	15,703	8,569
Others	587	140	167	40	318	89
Not applicable	37	9	65	21	210	81
Total	54,584	57,457	73,999	37,097	106,101	58,836

Source: Tanzania population and housing census, 2002.

**Table 5.4: Main Source of Household Energy for Cooking by, District in Morogoro. Percentages**

Main source of Energy for cooking	Morogoro (Urban	Morogoro Rural	Kilombero	Ulanga	Kilosa	Mvomero
Electricity	1.6	0.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.3
Paraffin	8.4	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.9
Gas	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Firewood	25.3	92.5	76.2	92.9	82.7	83.8
Charcoal	63.4	6.4	21.4	6.4	14.8	14.6
Others	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2
Not applicable	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Total	100	100	100	100	98.9	100

Source: Tanzania Population and Housing census, 2002 (with author's modifications).

The table 5.3 and 5.4 show that, a large number and percentages of households, use firewood as a source of energy for cooking, followed by charcoal. Morogoro urban have a small number of households which use firewood compared to rural and other districts. Uses of firewood can imply lower income of households since it often may mean not affording charcoal and other sources of energy like electricity. Firewood collection in Tanzania and Morogoro particularly cost time and energy and is regarded as the domestic work specialised by women and girls. It will be interesting to know how this responsibility can influence girls' secondary education.

## **5.5 Traditions Customs and Practices in Morogoro Region**

Traditional customs and practices in Morogoro vary from one ethnic group to another. The common practices include puberty initiation rites and ceremonies which are common among the waluguru of rural Morogoro and Mvomero, wapogoro and wandamba of Kilosa and Ulanga. Puberty initiation rites are rituals done to the girls after the onset of their first



menstruation. These rituals include training of how to become a responsible wife and mother. After the completion of a period of rituals, a girl comes out for the first time in public with a big ceremony and she is free to get married. Early marriage is also a practice done in Morogoro region, especially in the rural areas. Moreover, it is regarded as an honour to parents for a girl to get married soon; it is not preferable to get married late.

A strong gender division of work is common in Tanzania and also in Morogoro. Girls' work is concentrated on domestic works like cooking, fetching for water and firewood. Girls are also regarded as a helper to their mother or sometimes can work as a substitute when the mother is not around. Looking after young siblings is a common responsibility of girls in many parts of Tanzania.

### **5.5.1 Puberty Initiation Rites and Ceremonies**

It is a passage of rite undergone by girls from adolescent to adulthood. It is a common, traditional practice among the Waluguru, Wandamba and Wapogoro of the Morogoro region. Girls undergo initiation rites when they undergo their menstruation for the first time. As soon as girl starts her menstruation, she is kept inside the house in a special room, where she will be undergoing some training from elder women excluding her mother. During this period, a girl learn how to behave in the society as a grown up adult, how to respect member of the society especially elders and also to take care of herself by observing cleanliness especially during the menstruation. On the other hand, a girl is trained to avoid irresponsible sexual behaviour before marriage as may result into unexpected pregnancies or diseases. However, during initiation session a girl is trained about sexuality and sexual pleasures that go with it and how to satisfy a husband with sexual pleasures when she gets married (Hamdani, 2012). After the training, a big ceremony is organised known as *kunemwa mwali*, a girl who underwent initiation rites is known as *Mwali* and a ceremony as *kunemwa* from a Swahili word. Puberty initiation ceremonies are among the big ceremonies in the ethnic groups, in Morogoro region people celebrate by eating, drinking and dancing local dances. *Mwali* is dressed up, in a special way, with makeup on her and is carried on the shoulder of the strong man while shaking her body according to the rhythms' of the drums. A trained girl becomes a centre of attraction from the big crowd from her village and even neighbourhood villages. It is common for girls to be married as soon after the puberty initiation ceremonies.

### **5.5.2 Early Marriages**

Most of the early marriages practices among the local ethnic groups in Morogoro regions happen as soon after the puberty initiation rites and ceremonies. The marriage arrangements are done by the family of the girl, after scrutinising the family history of the groom to be. After the arrangement, the groom family pays the bride price in the form of money or in kind to the bride's family. The bride's uncles have a special role in the arrangements of marriage and have the special portion of the bride price paid. A mother of the bride to be has special payments known as *mkaja wa mama*. However, there is a relationship between puberty initiation rites and early marriages of girls in Morogoro region, because a girl is allowed to get married after the puberty initiation ceremonies, in fact, it is regarded as pride to the family for a girl to get married as soon after the initiation rites ceremonies. Poverty also plays a significant role whereby, a girl may be used as a source of income through a bride price.

### **5.5.3 Gender Division of Work**

Gender division of work is very common in most parts of Tanzania including Morogoro region. Girls work is concentrated on domestic works like, cooking, fetching water and firewood and sometimes looking after the young siblings. Morogoro region and elsewhere in Tanzania girls are regarded as helpers to their mothers and sometimes substitute when a mother is not around. While girls concentrate in home chores, boys are left free relaxing or doing their school home works. The practice is more intense in rural areas where social services like water and electricity energy are scarce; the situation can be different in urban areas where family with income employ a housemaid which reduces the girls' responsibilities at home. This practice may be of negative influence to girls' secondary education, as girls do not get enough time, to rest and do their school home works at homes compared to boys. Due to tiredness caused by home chores girls' school participation may be influenced, as they may not be active in school activities. Inactive participation in the schooling process can lead to poor academic performances.

### **5.5.4 Son Preference**

In Morogoro region and many parts of Tanzania, it is a common practice for the society to celebrate when a baby boy is born than a girl. A son child is valued and empowered over a girl. A son is regarded as a future family leader and a girl as a temporary member of the

family, who will join her husband's family after she got married. In order to make a desired head of the family, the parents will invest their energy and finance to make sure a son is educated to become a successful member of the society. Furthermore, sons are treated as superior over girls at home. It is common for parents to consider boys first when making decisions like education.

## **5.6 Case Study Secondary Schools**

### **5.6.1 Lupanga Practicing Secondary School**

The school is located in urban Morogoro, a day secondary school with mixture students (coeducation). It was established in 2006. The school is under Morogoro teachers college which uses it as a practicing secondary school for their teacher students. The school consist of ordinary level (Form 1 up to Form 4). It was undergoing construction work when I arrived for field work.

### **5.6.2 Kola Hill Secondary School**

It is located in Morogoro urban district, in Kola Hill area. It is a day co-education secondary school built and owned by both the community and government. It was established in 2008.

The purpose of its establishment was to expand the enrolment opportunities to secondary education, for children around the area. The areas around school include Kigurunyembe, Kolla A, and Kichangani. It includes ordinary level classes (O-level, Form 1 to Form 4).

### **5.6.3 Nyandeo Secondary School**

The school is located in Kilombero district. It is a community owned school, coeducation and day secondary school. It was established in 2006 by the initiatives of government and community (URT, 2006). The aim of establishment was to expand the chances of children around the area to get a secondary education. Villages around the school include Kidatu, Kilombero, Mkamba and Chicago to mention the few. It is an ordinary level secondary school.

#### **5.6.4 Cane Growers Secondary School**

It is located in Kilombero district. Is a coeducation day secondary education established and owned by the community and the government. Cane Growers Secondary School was established around 2007. The name of school is a result of the tremendous contribution made by the sugarcane small farmers in the establishment of the school. The area is located near Kilombero Sugar Company which makes most of what the people in the community produce from in sugar cane small farming. It is an ordinary level secondary school. The school was still in building progress when I visited it in 2010 for my data collection.

## **CHAPTER 6: Findings**

This chapter presents analyses and discusses the findings of the study. The findings include prevailing traditional customs and practices. A second theme is the influence of those traditional customs and practices on girls' secondary education. The themes were further divided into sub themes as will be shown below.

### **6.1 The Prevailing Traditional Customs and Practices**

In every society, there are different ways of doing and behaving. Traditional customs and practices have a crucial role of shaping and modifying the society/community behaviour and practices. Social norms and customs create incentives that guide peoples' behaviours (UNESCO, 2004p.118). My first objective was to explore the traditional customs and practices in the area. The research respondents in this study were secondary school girls and classroom teachers. Data were collected through semi structured interview and focus group interview. During the interview, girls and teachers revealed various traditional customs and practices, present in their area. Puberty initiation rites and ceremonies, gender based division of domestic work, son preference and early marriages are among practices mentioned. The above interview quotations suggest that these traditional customs and practices are strong components of this society. However, during the study, I realised there is a wide variation of social norms and practice between urban and rural areas. UNESCO (2004 p.118) reports that norms are highly diverse across and within societies and that they can change in response to the environment and economic.

#### **6.1.1 Puberty Initiation Rites and Ceremonies**

The adolescent period is the transition period from childhood to adulthood. During this period, both boys and girls experience a various physical and psychological changes. Physical changes include an increase in height, growth of genital parts, deep voice in boys and growth of breasts to girls. It is at this time when both girls and boys start experiencing sexual arousal, which may make them vulnerable to unsafe sex. Given the risks associated with this transition period different cultures have various ways to deal with and make adolescents cope with the period. Puberty initiation rites and ceremonies are mentioned customary practices both girls and boys undergo during adolescence in Morogoro. During the interview, girls revealed that, it is their society's norm for a girl to undergo puberty initiation by being kept in the house for

a certain time after the first experience of menstruation. They explained that while inside the girl will be undergoing some training on how to become a responsible girl and mother in the future. The initiation rites period mentioned varies from seven days to several months. Regarding the initiation rites practice one girl from secondary school D explained her experience:

*I was in primary school at the seventh grade, when I first started my menstruation. I stayed in the house for about seven days. While inside I was trained to start practicing proper hygiene by being clean, I was also taught not to be close to boys anymore, but also I was told that, I was already an adult, so I am not suppose to be close to small girls. I had to return to school after seven days because of the primary school national examination ahead, maybe I could stay longer if there would be no examination ahead of me....(smiling).*

Speaking on the same issue, another girl student from secondary school C explained:

*I was kept inside the house for seven days when I first started my menstruation period. I was not allowed to do anything while in the house rather than eating, training and relaxing. I was told not to be close to other small girls, boys or my father and also told that it is not acceptable manner for a grown up girl to be close to her father.*

The above interview quotations suggest that these traditional customs and practices are strong components of this society. However, during the study, I realised there is a wide variation of social norms and practice between urban and rural areas. UNESCO (2004 p.118) reports that norms are highly diverse across and within societies and that they can change in response to the environment and economic.

During the study, I learned that not all girls in urban and rural areas of Morogoro underwent puberty initiation rites. One girl from secondary school A, whose mother is a teacher and father doctor said:

*I did not go through the puberty initiation rites when I got my first menstruation, however; my mother just taught me how to dress up during this period. Apart from that, she told me to be aware of irresponsible sexual relationship as may result into pregnancy or diseases like HIV/ AIDS.*

I then interviewed teachers concerning the puberty initiation rites. One female teacher who is a deputy head teacher in secondary school C gave this description:

*I was transferred here from another place. When I first arrived, I was shocked by the puberty initiation rites practices. Most of the girls are kept in the house for a period of seven to thirty days. We decided to discuss that matter with parents; they still practice it though the days of initiations have been reduced, it is significant improvement but we are still trying to fight against the practice.*

When I asked another teacher from the urban area secondary school, she described this:

*We do not have a big problem of puberty initiation rites to girls in this school; however there are few girls from certain families like 'waluguru' still practice that.*

Furthermore, I interviewed teachers to know if there is any influence of the puberty initiation rites and ceremonies on girls' education. A teacher from secondary school D described this:

*Girls' education is affected so much with these practices; first, girls miss classes, and when they come back it is difficult for them to catch up with studies, apart from that, most of them come back with low morale to the studies as they focus more to the adulthood life such as marriage than studies.*

Talking on the same issue a teacher from secondary school C explained this:

*It is a common practice here, and girls' education is influenced negatively by this puberty initiation rites practices. However, some of the girls after initiation it is the end of their secondary education because they do not return to school anymore.*

After hearing from the teachers and students concerning the influential relationship between puberty initiation rites practices and girls' education, I wanted to know what the role of the school's administration in this matter; I interviewed the head of schools concerning the issue. The head of secondary school D said this:

*It is not easy for the society to get rid of traditions, customs and practices which they believe in, but we as school administration are trying to educate parents on the importance of their daughters' education through different meetings we have with*

*them. However, we have realised that most of the parents have low or no formal education at all, so it is real difficult to convince them. We hope we will achieve this.*

During the study, I learned that most of the girls in urban, whose parents are either civil workers or business owners, never went through puberty initiation rites in contrast to their peers in rural areas. When I asked teachers why traditional customs are likely to be practiced more in rural than urban areas, they mentioned lack of education of parents, poverty and that lack of exposure make most of the parents in rural areas conservatives about their outdated customs. Both teachers and girls' students revealed that these customs and practices promote early marriages, girls' pregnancies and girls dropping out of school.

### **6.1.2 Early Marriages**

One of the heading in Habarileo, a Swahili newspaper of 19/9/2011, writes about a case of “twelve girls student are given into marriage, one of them to be married as a fourth wife”. In another situation the regional commissioner officer of Morogoro is quoted as saying that:

*We cannot tolerate such behaviours. People who terminate studies of their children should not be entertained as they deny children their basic rights (The citizen, 2011:7).*

The statements above suggest that there is a serious problem of early marriages of girls in Tanzania. When I interviewed girls concerning these traditional practices present in their area, one girl from secondary school C explained:

*When we were in primary school, some of my fellow pupils got married right away after being initiated. Some parents are insecure that their daughter might get pregnant before they complete their education and hence bring shame into their family.*

Talking on the same issue of girls early marriages of secondary school girls, a teacher from secondary school D explained this:

*It is very common practice in this area girls just disappear from school and later we realise they are married. Due to government strict laws and regulation, parents marry off their daughters secretly. This practice is mainly contributed by poverty whereby*



*parents are attracted by the bride price being paid to them, and also lack of education, in which parents do not value their daughters.*

Explaining on the school management roles concerning school girls' early marriage, head of secondary school B explained this:

*It is highly prohibited, and against the country laws for parents to marry off school girls; recently there has been active government's rules against girls' early marriages. Schools managements have been working together with the village local governments, to identify parents who take their daughters out of school in order to give them into marriage. If identified, both parents and the groom committed the offence are taken to the court, and the girl is returned to school. These government's initiatives have real helped to reduce the number and risk of girls to be taken out of schools, however; sometimes it can be a little bit late where girls have already started the family.*

From the study interview, I learned that the practice of bride price payment among the Morogoro community plays a significant role in the early marriages of girls, as girls may be used as a source of income. Bride price, which is paid to the bride's parents, can be in kind or in the form of money. Contrary to a negative portrayal of the effect of bride price on girls' education that was mentioned above, UNESCO (2004 p.124) EFA reports that a bride price can also serve as a powerful incentive to educate girls. The report gives the example of many parts of southern Africa where educated girls tend to attract higher price.

There are interlink-ages between customary practices in that the practice of one traditional practice can lead to another. For example, the practice of puberty initiation rites and son preference may lead to early marriages of girls. However, low economic and education level of the parents can contribute to early marriages of girls. During the study, I also learned that most of the girls are at risk of getting married during their last years of primary schools or early years of their secondary schools, because that time is because that is the time of the onset of the first menstruation for most girls. Parents' education, especially mother's, may lead to wiser decision in the family, particularly on the importance of educating a girl.

### **6.1.3 Son Preference**

Most of the Tanzanian societies are patriarchy structured. Kabeer (2003) identifies patriarchy societies as societies characterised by male dominance where- by families are organised under

the control of the senior male. Societies with patriarchy tend to be characterised by ‘son preference’ (preference for son) and discrimination against daughters from the early years of life (UNESCO, 2004 p.119). Sons tend to be valued and empowered over daughters. Under the patriarchy structure, the family is socialised into unequal gender relations. The organisation Plan-UK (2011:34) writes that “this early discrimination sets the scene for the way a girl is treated throughout life”. During the interview, respondents told me there is son preference practice in their society. A girl from secondary school B said this:

*In this society, boys’ education is more valued than girls’. On my way home from school, sometimes people joke with me about; how long it will take for me to graduate, and that, it is better for me to get married before I get older in school, however; boys are more valued at home than girl.*

A teacher from secondary school C, elaborating on her experience on the ‘son preference’ practice, explained this:

*Most of the parents here do not value their daughter’s education; some parents find it as a waste of money to pay their daughter’s school fees, they prefer them to get married more than schooling. I think the lack of exposure and education contributes to this attitude of parents.*

Other girls during the interview explained that most of the parents value boys more than girls, because boys will be the elders of the family later. Kabeer(2003) notes that a patriarchal local system of marriage requires a woman to be absorbed into the husband’s family. My view on this issue is that investing in girl’s education is needed in order to break out of ‘son preference’ and discrimination against girls in a society. Education is powerful tool to break any form of discrimination and inequality in a society.

#### **6.1.4 Gender Division of Domestic Work**

“Social norms play a significant role in explaining why and how gender differentiation occur, how it becomes legitimized through the division of labour between men and women”(UNESCO,2004:123). Giving examples from some parts of Africa, such as Guinea, Ethiopia and Tanzania; the UNESCO report of (2004 p.122) reports that girls are more specialised in domestic works than boys.

Gender based division of labour in the home was mentioned as one of the prominent norms adhered to in Morogoro urban and rural areas. Both urban and rural Morogoro girls mentioned working more than boys at home. Fetching water, cleaning the house, taking care of the young siblings and cooking are some of the girls' daily responsibilities mentioned. A girl student from a secondary school A gave this account:

*When I arrive home from school I wish to have a time to relax a bit; instead I find a lot of house chores waiting for me, fetching water, washing dishes and cooking dinner. There is no way I can delay those chores for if I do, my family members will not have their dinner.*

On the same point, another girl from a secondary school A observed:

*A surprising thing is that, when girls are loaded with responsibilities, boys are left free relaxing or going to sports with their peers.*

During the interview, I was curious to know why girls worked more and why. A secondary school girl explained:

*I grew up seeing my sisters working more with house works than my brothers. My mother always says it is the best way to train a girl to become a responsible mother and wife in the future.*

Then I interviewed teachers, to know whether this practice of girls being working more at home than boys has any impacts on their education, a teacher from secondary school B explained this:

*Girls being overworked at home real affect their schooling process they hardly concentrate in the class because of the tiredness, some of the girls dose during the lessons, therefore, this can cause them not to participate well in the schooling processes and hence poor performances.*

The above quotations illustrate the unequal distribution of responsibility at home. Unequal treatment, of girls and boys, that we see in the society have its root from the family/household. Supporting the contention, the organisation Plan-UK (2011:33) states: "The roots of discrimination between boys and girls begin in the home". The household is therefore a prominent place for starting with the equal treatment between boys and girls.

During the study, I realised that, gender division of work at home was dominant in both urban and rural areas in Morogoro, suggesting perhaps that the gender division of house works is more due to social norms than to economic factors.

## **6.2 Rural-Urban Divide**

During the interview, I learned that traditional customs and practices are more dominant in rural Morogoro than in urban areas. According to the population and housing census of 2002, the total population of Tanzania mainland was 33,461,849. The rural population was 25,907,011 equal to 77.0 percent, and the urban population was 7,554,838 equal to 22 percent. Out of the total population in Morogoro, the rural population was 1,279,513 equal to 73.0 percent whilst the urban population was 473,849 equal to 27.0 percent. Thus, the majority of Tanzanian population are in the rural areas. The research respondents mentioned poverty, lack of education and motivation among factors characterising the urban-rural divide.

### **6.2.1 Poverty**

Most of the Tanzanian rural areas are disadvantaged, characterised by a high level of poverty. Respondents mentioned that due to the poverty of most families in the rural areas, parents cannot afford to send their children to secondary schools due to lack of money for school fees. Therefore, girls' early marriages are a common option chosen by rural families. Although girls' domestic work was common to both urban and rural areas, poverty is thought to increase its intensity in rural areas. Supporting this one girl from secondary school D said:

*I and my other two siblings are living with our grandmother who owns a small business of selling local beer at the village local bar. We do not have running water and electricity at home. Therefore, it is my responsibility to make sure I fetch water, firewood for cooking and make sure my siblings eat dinner every day.*

In addition to the poverty issue, another girl from secondary school C narrated this:

*Due to family poverty, some of the girls after graduating from primary schools are taken to towns and cities, to work as house maids. Some of girls being passed their primary school examinations, but their families could not afford school fees for their secondary education, so they have no choice rather than work and support their families back home.*

This illustrates my impression that in rural areas extremely poverty and shortage of social services like water and electricity power can make girls more prone to social practices and norms that limit their chance of obtaining education.

Thus, it seems likely that in rural areas girls are more vulnerable to such traditional customs and practices as domestic labour and early marriages are than their peers in urban areas. Regarding the relationship between poverty and girls' education, UNESCO (2008 p. 104-104) based on a survey done in some African countries like Burkina Faso, Zambia and Mali reports, argues that poverty weighs more heavily on girls than on boys and more so at secondary than primary education level. However, another report by UNESCO (2004 p.122) that was based on the study done in Guinea, Ethiopia and Tanzania reports that there is not always interaction between poverty and domestic labour for girls. The report states that girls' domestic labour is more a result of social factors than economic ones. I concur with this latter UNESCO report about the importance social norms because it is the dominant practice in both the economically worse of rural areas and the urban areas. In both it appears to be common to assigning girls with home responsibility as preparatory training for a girl to become a responsible mother and wife.

### **6.2.2 Lack of Education**

Parents' education and especially mother's education can be a significant means of promoting both boy and girl children's education (Kabeer, 2003 p.38). Rural Tanzanian areas particularly Morogoro are characterised by low education levels among parents. Parents' education, especially the mother's, influences decision making concerning children education. Educated mother will have a positive influence when it comes to girl's education. Plan-UK (2011) also suggests that educated mothers are more likely to send their own daughters to school (p.57). Regarding the issue of rural-urban divide, one respondent explained:

*It is very difficult for a girl from the rural areas to proceed with education without obstacles. First she will face economic obstacles such as school fees and then traditional obstacles, where- by the whole community will be discouraging her from keeping on schooling and from staying un-married.*

### **6.2.3 Lack of Parental Motivation for Girls' Education**

Lack of parental motivation for girls' education was also mentioned as a reason for the persistence of traditional customs in the rural areas. A teacher from secondary school B observed:

*Parents here are very conservative concerning their traditional practices; they value them more than education. Sometimes a parent is willing to spend money for a puberty initiation ceremony rather than paying a girl's school fees.*

Respondents explained that since most of the rural parents are either not formally educated or have very little schooling, their motivation for girls' education is low. Respondents repeatedly pointed out that lack of exposure to the external world makes most of the parents' conservative concerning their traditional customs. Speaking on parents' lack of exposure a girl from secondary school D (located in the rural area) explained:

*Most of the parents in the rural areas are still backward; due to lack of exposure and education they do not know the importance of education especially for girls. What they think is to marry off a girl as soon as she completes primary education. The situation is different in urban areas parents value girls' education because most of them are educated and they know the real situation, which is difficult for someone to survive nowadays without education.*

Lack of reliable transport and communication services like quality roads, railways and telephones, separate the rural population from the urban population. Further, lack of electric power, which means no television, limit the rural population from exposure to seeing what is going on in other parts of the world.

### **6.3 The Influence of Traditional Customs and Practices on Girls' Education**

During the interview, both respondents from rural and urban Morogoro mentioned that traditional customs and practices have influences on access, participation, equity and achievement of girls' secondary education.

### 6.3.1 Access

Access to education is defined by MOEC (1995:17) as “the opportunities available to the target population to participate in ...education”. Though Tanzanian government has made a remarkable progress in increasing access in to primary education by abolishing primary school fees as it is reported by UNESCO (2008p.63), there are still factors that limit students especially girls access to secondary education. During the interview, respondents mentioned that, the male dominance in family and society which confers greater value to a boy than a girl child, literally limits girls’ chances of education. Respondents explained that since boys are regarded as the future house elder, they are given all opportunities available including education in order to become the ‘best people’. On the other hand, girls are seen as temporary family members who will join their husband’s family after marriages. In explaining this, one girl from secondary school C commented:

*It is sad that girls always come second after boys in our families. Parents make less effort for our education than for boys. In case of inadequate fund for paying school fees, it is a boy who is sent to school first.*

Speaking on the same point a girl from secondary school D narrated her story:

*My two older siblings both sister and brother passed their primary school examinations to join secondary school, but, my parents had not enough fund. Therefore; they sent my brother first to school and my sister waited for the next year.*

The quotations above illustrate the impression that girls in Morogoro are not given equal opportunity to education compared to boys. Education as a universal right to all children is sometimes violated due to gender stereotypes. The family is the prominent place to make the decision concerning children, and the level of parent education will determine the decision they make (UNESCO, 2004 p.119). Though traditional customs and practice are mentioned as a negative influence on girls’ access to education, we cannot overlook other factors such as parents lack education, exposure and poverty. Kabeer (2003) notes that parental education is a significant influence of children’s education, and, that mothers’ is especially important (p.30).

Despite the presence of traditional customs and practices hindrances to girls’ education, various initiatives have been implemented by Tanzanian government to widen education

opportunities to girls. One of the initiatives is that, in the shortage of secondary schools girls are given more chance to secondary education over boys.

**Table 6.1: Number of Pupils Selected (First Selection) to Join Form 1 in Public Secondary Schools in Morogoro, by District 2005**

District	Passed				Selected to join secondary education			
	Number of Boys	Number of Girls	Total	Girls as % of Total	Number of Boys selected	% selected of those boys who had passed	Number of girls selected	% selected of those girls who had passed
Kilombero	2860	2009	4869	41.3	783	22.7	761	37.9
Kilosa	2526	2203	4729	46.6	1726	68.3	1715	77.8
Morogoro Urban	2061	1353	3914	34.6	446	21.6	455	33.6
Morogoro Rural	1786	1455	3241	44.9	515	28.8	503	34.6
Mvomero	1389	1341	2720	49.3	653	47.0	636	47.4
Ulanga	1377	855	2232	38.3	345	25.1	333	38.9
Total	11999	9716	21715	44.7	4468	37.2	4406	45.3

Source: Basic Education Statistic of Tanzania, Regional Statistics (BEST, 2006) with the modification from my Supervisor.

The figures in the table 6.1 show a gender gap in primary school examination performances, more boys pass than do girls. One might therefore expect that more boys would have chances to get into secondary education, than would girls. However, due to shortage of secondary schools government through girls' education initiatives favours girls over boys, more girls were selected to join secondary education compared to boys. Furthermore, the better academic performances of boys than girls in the primary school leaving examination signify that girls face different hindrance factors in their education since primary education.



### 6.3.2 Participation

UNESCO report (2008 p.64) states that it is not enough to speak about enrolment when we talk about participation. Participation should also include retention and completion with the intended learning outcomes. Further, improved educational participation requires overcoming obstacles that limit students from getting equal and quality education. Though there is a remarkable progress of participation of children in primary education in most of African countries including Tanzania due to expanded provision and the abolition of primary school fees, indirect costs and direct costs of school uniform and books still constrain the opportunity of children from poor families to join schools. These constraints are worse in secondary education where the cost is much higher than in primary education.

MOEC (1995) notes that participation of girls especially in secondary education in Tanzania, has been growing up slowly due to, son preference practice, early marriages and also pregnancy (p.19).

During the interview, some of the respondents mentioned that the prevalence of traditional customs and practices in their society limit girls to participate fully in secondary education. Puberty initiation rite was among the traditional practice mentioned; respondents explained that girls miss schools and classroom sessions during this time as they are taken out from school for a period of time to attend trainings. Explaining on this a teacher from secondary school C elaborated:

*The initiation time ranges from seven days to several months, girls miss class during that time, and so it is difficult for them to catch up with studies when they come back, this practice limit chances of girls to participate fully in their studies.*

The negative impact associated with this practice include, girls losing interest in schooling and being eager to enter marriage life. Colclough (2003:151) in his study on girls' education and traditional practices in Ethiopia and Tanzania, writes "...girls' interest in schooling declined dramatically after being initiated". Though the family is the important place to make decisions concerning children participation to school, however, the family decisions are guided by the society's norms and practices which create incentives that guide peoples' behaviour (UNESCO, 2004 p.117). Social and economic change can change customs and practices relating to gender relations. The way that schools are staffed and equipped is also

likely to matter. Unfriendly school environment such as poor sanitation facilities and lack of female teachers' role models can limit girls to attend and participate actively in education.

### 6.3.3 Academic Performance

During the interview, girls explained that their academic performance in schools is negatively influenced by the prevailing traditional customs and practices. They do not have enough time to study at home as they are kept busy with home chores. Girls mentioned that due to stereotypes attitudes of society towards girl children, they are discouraged from working hard in school and hence their performance suffers.

I examined the previously last year Form 4 national examinations results (2010) from the sample secondary school, to see if there is any performance gap between girls and boy students.

**Table 6.2: Form 4 National Examination Results of 2011**

	School A(Urban)			School B(Urban)			School C(Rural)			School D(Rural)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of students sat for the exams	118	138	256	84	46	130	91	51	142	57	60	117
Percent of student (boys & girls) sat for the exams	46	54	100	65	35	100	64	36	100	49	51	100
Number of passed student(boys & girls)	58	56	114	19	10	29	31	6	37	13	12	25
Percent who passed of those sitting for exams	49	41	45	23	22	22	34	12	26	23	20	21

Source: National examination council of Tanzania (NECTA), (2011).

The data, from form 4 national examination results of the year 2011 show that, there was a gap of performance in both schools, between boys and girl. Boys performed better than girls

in all four schools; however the performance gap was much bigger in school C. It was quite slight in school B and D. If figures from all four schools were combined, the pass rate would be 35 and 28 percent respectively for boys and girls. The finding fits the argument about girls being at some disadvantage also at the point when they have advanced to far in school that they sit for the exam. The case of school C having a bigger gap of performance between boys and girls could signify the importance of the urban-rural divide as discussed before. However in school D, another rural school the difference in pass rate is quite small and could probably easily be due to chance. So, there appear to be differences among schools in how girls perform relative to boys, though rates based on such small figures may vary considerably from year to year. Rural areas are disadvantaged, characterized with high poverty rates which make them more prone to traditional customs effects than urban areas. The performance level, on which the table presents findings, is for those who have reached the stage in their schooling where they are sitting for the exam. All four groups of examinees contained both boys and girls. In school A and D there were more girls' candidates and more boys candidates in school B and C.

Though boys did perform better than girls in all schools, but the overall performance of both boys and girls was strikingly poor. School related factors might also contribute to that poor performance. All sample schools are day school, community owned established by the government through its education programme known as Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP). Through SEDP plan, the Tanzanian government aimed, to expand children access to secondary education especially the marginalised children.

**Table 6.3: Summary of Pass Rates in Form 4 Examination (CSEE) by Subject and Sex for School Candidates, 2008 - 2009**

Subject	Year	Candidate Sat			Candidate Passed					
		M	F	T	M	%	F	%	T	%
Civics	2008	86112	69527	155639	56172	65,2	40459	58,2	96631	62,1
	2009	129366	110967	240333	86689	67,0	62135	56,0	148824	61,9
Kiswahili	2008	86158	69512	155670	69051	80,1	57960	83,4	127011	81,6
	2009	129349	110957	240306	90494	70,0	78595	70,8	169089	70,4
English	2008	86158	59522	145680	57122	66,3	41314	69,4	98436	67,6
	2009	129339	119943	249282	82585	63,9	61655	51,4	144240	57,9
History	2008	83291	67814	151105	61803	74,2	38502	56,8	100305	66,4
	2009	125780	109094	234874	76881	61,1	44234	40,5	121115	51,6
Biology	2008	85510	69121	154631	46183	54,0	25383	36,7	71566	46,3
	2009	128081	110356	238437	64499	50,4	38483	34,9	102982	43,2
Geography	2008	86002	69505	155507	55449	64,5	36256	52,2	91705	59,0
	2009	128737	110861	239598	66239	51,5	36997	33,4	103236	43,1
B/Mathematics	2008	85625	69214	154839	26532	31,0	11145	16,1	37677	24,3
	2009	129306	110897	240203	30956	23,9	11759	10,6	42715	17,8
Physics	2008	32321	17987	50308	19585	60,6	7366	41,0	26951	53,6
	2009	41556	22936	64492	25923	62,4	9844	42,9	35767	55,5
Chemistry	2008	44318	30151	74469	30535	68,9	15743	52,2	46278	62,1
	2009	60082	42007	102089	38552	64,2	19699	46,9	58251	57,1

Note: Pass rates by subject in Form 4 examination is highest in Kiswahili, 81.6% and 70.4% and lowest in Basic Mathematics, 24.3% and 17.8% in 2008 and 2009 respectively to the two subjects. The performance of boys is higher than that of girls in science subjects.

Source: BEST, 2010.

Table 6.3 shows the general results of national candidates of form 4 in the year 2008 and 2009. The results show that boys performed better than girls in five subjects out of seven subjects. Boys performed better than girls in mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics and geography; while girls did better in Kiswahili and English subjects. It is understandable that in order to perform better in science subjects one needs more time to concentrate and commitment. As it was discussed in the previous chapters on girls' education obstacles, these examination results can signify the situation of girls being overworked at home, being less valued compared to boys and facing traditions practice limiting them to perform better.

The UNESCO report of (2008) writes that school location and different policies seem to have an impact on student performance in some countries (UNESCO, 2008 P.114-115). The poor performances of girls as shown in the table 6.2 and 6.3 have a lot to do with the stereotyping practices towards girls in the society. Plan-UK (2007:33) points out "...family is the place where millions of children, especially girls, face violence and abuse, and where girls are socialised to believe that they have a lower status and fewer rights than their brothers". Poorer performance of girls, relative to boys, in rural schools reflect a greater concentration of such adversity for girls in rural areas or simply the greater load they face of domestic work when growing up in the country side. One should also bear in mind that the parental level of schooling is generally lower at rural schools, and with higher level of parental education, the gender gap in educational opportunity is generally likely to be reduced.

Apart from traditional customs and practice, during the interview, respondents mentioned other barrier factors for girls' secondary education in Morogoro region.

#### **6.4 School Related Factors**

During the interviews, respondents mentioned that schools related factors to be a hindrance to girls' secondary education in Morogoro region, particularly in the case study schools. Long distance to schools mentioned as one of the limitations, most of secondary schools especially in the rural areas are located in a long distance from students' homes, further, shortage of transportation facilitations make the situation more difficult. Girls mentioned to walk to schools or to use bicycles if available. In explaining this, head of secondary school C said:

*Students are coming to schools from different villages, others from very long distance. There are no cars. So students who stay far start their journey very early, walking*

*long distances to schools can be very risk to girls as they can be rapped or robbed on their way, but they have no alternatives. I think it could be of very helpful if the government could establish dormitories for girls to stay at school as it could reduce the barriers girls face in their education.*

Talking on the long distance to school, a girl from secondary school D explained that:

*I'm staying far from here, so if I want to be early to school and not to be punished for late coming, I have to wake up very early. I do not have a bicycle, and so I walk. (With a sad face...).It is difficult but what can I do?*

Another girl from secondary school C, when asked about long distance to school explained this:

*I could be very happy if the school would have dormitories or hostels, staying at school would reduce the challenges we girls face in studying secondary education. It could be easy for me to plan my time table and concentrate to my studies. I do believe I would have performed better in my studies than now. Because, after all tiredness of walking to school and back home, I'm still facing many home chores, so it is very difficult to concentrate in my studies.*

When discussed the issue of distance to school, with urban areas secondary school girl students they had different views compared to their peers in the rural areas. A girl student from secondary school B explained this:

*We do not have a problem of transport to come to school. There are many public transports like buses which we use, the only challenge we can get, is sometimes there is high demand of transport by people who go to work in the morning, so we scramble to get in the bus so we get early to schools.*

During the interview, teachers mentioned that other parents fear the long distance to schools might be risk for their daughters. Parents fear their daughters may get pregnancy which they consider as a shameful act in the society and, therefore, they decide to pull them out of schools to be married.

The above quotations of distance to school and lack of transport imply the challenge students get in achieving their education; however, girls are affected more because apart from the

tiredness they face to and from schools, they are still responsible for home chores. The situation can signify that girls' lack of enough time to concentrate in their studies when they are at home, as a result, the situation can lead to the negative impacts on their schooling participation and performances.

During the discussion, girls also mentioned that shortage tap water and lack of privacy in the school toilets hinder them to participate in schooling effectively. Girls explained that with a shortage of running water it is difficult for them to participate in schooling effectively during their periods. Most of them said they chose to remain at home during their periods. Commenting on the shortage of water in toilets and lack privacy a teacher from a secondary school A analysed that:

*As you can see our school is still on the construction progress, therefore, we do not have many facilities yet like library, laboratory and even water system is not stable. We have toilets yes but, I think they are not enough compared to the number of students we have. I believe everything will be fine when the school will be finished but iam not sure when (smile...).*

From the above statements, it appears that girls who choose to remain at home during their periods miss classes and lessons for those days, and the situation affect their school participation and may lead to academic poor performances.

Respondents also mentioned lack of role models and support as one of the challenges that face secondary school girls in Morogoro region. Girls said that they lack role models at home and schools who can inspire and motivate them to continue and work hard with their studies. Most of the girls from the rural areas mentioned that the low social status of women in their society fails to motivate them to achieve high education level. A girl from secondary school C explained that:

*Most of women in our village have just primary school education, and others are school drop outs, most of them married after completing primary school or below that. We do not have highly educated women in our village, and, it is not common for women to study up to the higher education level, because the society encourages girls to get married early. Therefore, it is not easy to for girls to be motivated to study because of lack of role models.*

Apart from negative influence of traditional customs and practices to girls' secondary education, respondents mentioned few positive influences caused by these practices. Girls mentioned that traditional customs and practices have shaped their characters and made them responsible girls; others mentioned that those customs practices have helped them to be matured and to behave according to society's ways. A girl from secondary school A described this:

*During the initiation, I was taught many important things like to respect elders and society members. I was also taught that as, a grown up girl, I need to be clean and smart especially during my period.*

Another girl responding to the same issue said this:

*In my initiation rites, I was taught to be responsible girl and not have irresponsible sexual behaviours, which may lead to pregnancy or HIV/AIDS. I was taught different adulthood stuffs, like how to become a good wife and mother in the future. On the other hand, I was taught to respect all elders in the society including my teachers.*

When I asked her if learning about becoming good wife and mother in the future does not interfere with her studies, she responded this:

*I do not think so because I came back to school after initiation; also I was educated not to have irresponsible sexual behaviours which I think it is important, instead of irresponsible behaviour I put my focus to my studies.*

My view in the positive impacts of puberty initiation rites practices is that girls may be getting helpful knowledge in the initiations, but my consideration is that time they spend away from school is a challenge to their education achievements.

## **6.5 Summary of Findings**

The findings of the study have been presented, analysed and discussed. The presentations, analysis and discussion, have been, done in relation to the specific objectives of the study. The findings support the view that traditional customs and practices influence negatively secondary education of girls in Morogoro region. Apart from the adverse influence that traditional customs and practices may have, the literature reviewed also points to the



importance of socio-economic factors, parents' education backgrounds, rural-urban locations and school related conditions, to be among the factors that can influence negatively secondary education of girls.

## Chapter 7: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

### 7.1 Introduction

This study aimed at exploring the influences of traditional customs and practices on the secondary education of the girls in Morogoro region in Tanzania. This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations for further studies in the areas related to the study.

### 7.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the influences of the traditional customs and practices on the secondary education of girls in Morogoro region in Tanzania. The study involved four secondary schools of Morogoro region, two from the rural areas and two from urban areas of that region. The specific objectives were; first to explore the traditional customs and practices present in the area, and the second was to investigate the influences of practices to the secondary education of girls. The sample of the study included Form 1 girl students from each school, classroom teachers and head of schools from both four secondary schools.

My motivation for the study grown out of my experience of growing up, and later, working as a teacher at Morogoro region. Recalling my primary school experience, at grade four, I remember one day our class teacher was taking a roll call, then when she called a name of one girl the whole class answered *amevunja ungo* a Swahili word which means, *she has just started her first menstruation*. We never saw a girl at school again. Also, the different practices of traditions and customs towards girls at different parts of Tanzania and Morogoro in particular made me want to do a study on it.

The study faced some limitations during its implementations. Shortage of time ruled out the possibility of using observation as a research method. Also time did not allow following up girl students who had dropped out of schools due to different reasons, such as early marriages.

In order to explore the influences of traditional customs and practices to the girls' secondary education, various previous relevant studies were visited. Examples are a World Bank report of 2008, UNESCO reports of 2008 and 2003.

Ecological system theory was used to guide the study. Self determination theory also seemed relevant. The study employed a qualitative research strategy. In order to understand in depth the influences of the traditional customs and practices, on girls' secondary education, a case study design was employed. Four secondary schools were studied in, with 10 girl students, two subject teachers and 1 head of school chosen from each school.

Collection of the data of the study was done through the methods of personal interview, group focus interview and documentary analysis. In order to ensure adherence to ethical principles of the study, informed consent was employed, research permission was obtained from the ministry of education, and moreover, confidentiality was assured to the respondents concerning the information collected from them.

The informants reported negative impacts of traditional customs and practices on the secondary education of girls in Morogoro region. The findings suggest that girls in the Morogoro rural areas are more adversely affected by those practices than their peers in the urban areas. The findings also suggest that other conditions like parental education levels and other socio-economic conditions, and poor school environments have negative impacts on girls' chance of obtaining secondary education. Further, the study suggests that there is connection between traditional customs and practices prevalence with parental education, family income and area location. The study finding reveals that, girls from educated parents, good environment and supportive family and live in urban areas were less affected by those traditions compared to their peers living in the rural areas.

### **7.3 Discussion of the Major Findings**

The findings from the interview and documentary analysis confirm and reflect the work of the number of researchers and writers on girls' education in relation to socio-cultural factors, in Africa, (Colclough, 2003; World Bank; 2003, Kabeer; 2003 and king& hill; 1993). Many of these researchers study reports revealed the negative influence of traditional customs and practice to the girls' education in Africa. The findings of this study revealed that the influence of traditional customs and practice in girls' education cannot be studied in isolation from other factors like socio-economic, education policies and school environments factors. The study revealed various factors to have a negative influence on girls' education in Tanzania particularly in Morogoro region.

### **7.3.1 Traditional Customs and Practices**

The main objective of the research study was to explore the influence of traditions, customs and practices on secondary education of girls in Morogoro region. The data from the respondents' interview and content analysis revealed that there is a negative influence of these practices on girls' secondary education in Morogoro region. Early marriages, son preferences, initiation rites and ceremonies, were mentioned by the research respondents that they affect girls' education negatively as discussed before. The findings also revealed that there is imbalance treatment of children between boys and girls Morogoro region. Girls are perceived as future mothers and wives, and so the traditions and customs in the society strive to raise them in that perspective and hence no much education priority is given to girls.

It was not possible to study traditional customs and practices influences on secondary education of girls in Morogoro region without connecting to other factors discussed below:

### **7.3.2 Poverty**

The research findings revealed that poverty is another barrier limiting girls' to access secondary education in Morogoro region. Parents' lack of money for school fees may lead them to favour boys than girls. Respondents also mentioned that due to poverty some families decide to give their daughter early into marriages so they get the bride price.

Shortage of social services in the rural Morogoro areas makes girls to be more vulnerable to domestic chores such as fetching water and firewood, cooking and looking after their siblings. High rate of poverty in the rural areas make girls be prone to the domestic chores than their peers in the urban areas, and hence affect their concentration on the studies. The findings also revealed that due to family poverty most girls especially in the rural areas are employed as house maids in other families, in urban areas.

The study findings, also demonstrated that traditional customs and practices seem to increase its intensity in rural areas than urban areas due to poverty nature and lack of education and exposure of most of the parents.

### **7.3.3 Lack of Parental Education**

The study findings, also demonstrated that, traditional customs and practices seem to increase its intensity in rural areas than urban areas due to poverty nature and lack of education and exposure of most of the parents.

### **7.3.4 Schools and Policy Related Factors**

The study findings demonstrated that poor and unsupportive environments of schools to be a barrier to girls secondary in Morogoro region. Most of the girls mentioned to stay at home during their periods due to lack of toilets and water at schools. Long distances to schools mentioned to limit girls to access secondary education, as other parents choose to pull their daughters out of schools for fear that they may get pregnancy. Girls who get pregnancy at school are required to go back to school after delivering their babies, but the education policy does not state clearly how those girls will be protected from stereotypes and stigma. Lack of school dormitories also was found to be a hindrance to girls' secondary education; the findings manifested that girls could have more concentration time for their studies if they could stay at schools dormitories than at home.

## **7.4 Conclusion**

In the context of poverty, secondary education is a very important tool as it provides the required skills needed for the economic improvement. It is very important for women to be educated as they play important roles in both society and the family. Though many initiatives have been made by the Tanzanian government, to address the gender gap in education, girls still lag behind boys. Factors like the presence of oppressive traditional customs and practices mentioned to hinder the progress of girls education. The barriers to girls' secondary education can be solved by the Tanzanian government, to address different issues including the factors mentioned in study. In order to address barriers to girls' education in Tanzania and Morogoro region, in particular, the government should distribute equally social services between rural and urban areas so as to motivate teachers to work in rural areas and reduce girls workloads at home, further, the school environments should be improved to enhance learning and teaching processes. More sensitisation and education needed to the mass about the importance of girls and women education.

## **7.5 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following was recommended:

- There is a need of reviewing educational policies, particularly concerning girls' education. Educational policies should promote and protect girls to achieve their educational goals, for example, by promoting a friendly environment for girls to return to school after giving birth.
- There is a need to educate the public about the importance of girls' education and to discourage traditions and customs that are barriers to girls' education.
- School environments and facilities should be improved so as to encourage girls' access, participation and academic achievement in secondary education.

### **7.5.1 Recommendations for Further Studies**

Given that, the study has explored the influences of traditional customs and practices on secondary education of girls in 4 schools, in Morogoro region, I recommend further studies on this topic but with larger sample so as to generate general sable findings.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: A request for permission to conduct research at Lupanga practicing Secondary School, Kola Hill secondary School, Nyandeo Secondary School and Cane-Growers Secondary School.**

Olav M Troviks Vei 58 H0 406

0864, Oslo

Norway

10th July 2010.

Permanent Secretary,  
Ministry of Education and Vocational Training,  
P.O.BOX 9121,  
Dar es Salaam.

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### **RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY**

Refer the heading above. I am Grace Charles Mteweale, a second year student in the masters of philosophy in Comparative and International Education at the University of Oslo.

I hereby seek a permission to conduct research for my master's thesis at Lupanga practicing secondary school, Kola Hill secondary school, Nyandeo secondary school and Cane-Growers secondary school. My research topic is "The influence of traditional customs and practices on girls' education in Morogoro region in Tanzania: A case study. I seek to interview Head of Schools Classroom teachers and girl students.

Find attached my introductory letter from the University of Oslo.

Yours faithfully,

Grace Mteweale.

## **APPENDIX 2: Interview guides**

### **A: Interview Questions to girl students**

1. What are the traditional customs and practices prevailing/practiced in your area?
2. Do you have any experience of these practices mentioned, if yes please elaborate.
3. Do you think the traditional customs and practices present have any influences to girl's education?
4. What are your perceptions towards these practices?

### **B: Interview Questions to Head of Schools.**

1. Having a school located within a society and students are coming from various ethnic groups, do you think there are any traditional customs and practices influencing school activities and students?
2. What is your perception towards these traditional customs and practices?
3. What is your role as a school administrator towards girls' education in relation to traditional customs and practices?

### **C: Interview Questions to classroom teachers**

1. Are there any traditional customs and practices in the area?
2. As a teacher, do you have any practical experience of these practices towards students?
3. Do you think these practices have any influences on girls' education
4. What is your role as a teacher concerning these practices?